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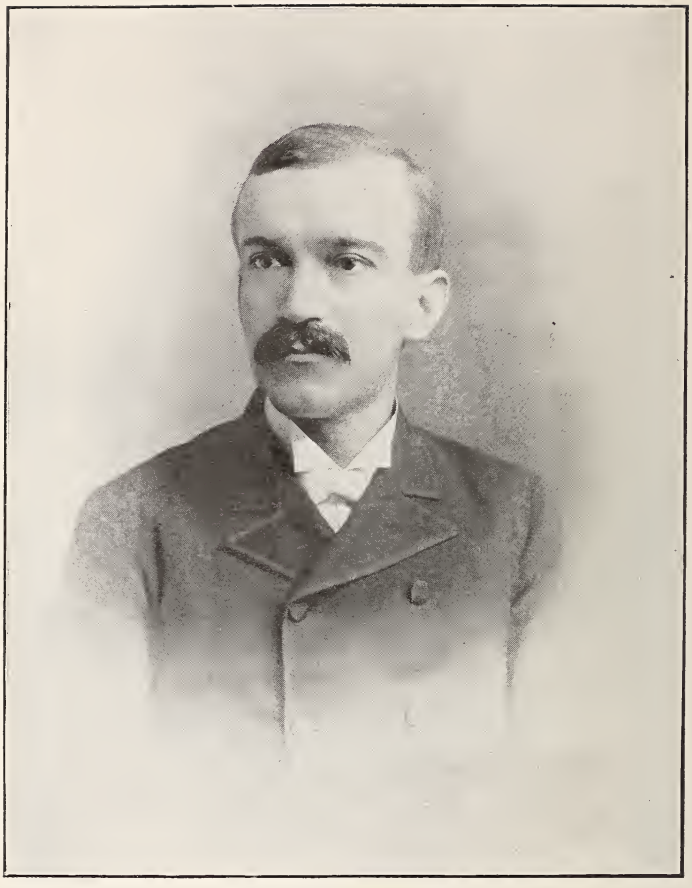
THE IDEAL CHURCH





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WM. H. ZWEIZIG.

THE IDEAL CHURCH



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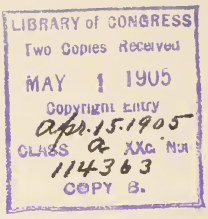
REV. WILLIAM H. ZWEIZIG



AWAKE, AWAKE; PUT ON THY STRENGTH, O ZION; PUT ON THY BEAUTIFUL GARMENTS, O JERUSALEM, THE HOLY CITY.--Isaiah 52:1.



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"What kind of a church would our church be,
If every member were just like me?"

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By the Author.

Copies of "The Ideal Church" can be procured by sending to M. K. Zweizig, 501 North 12th Street, Reading, Pa. Price—Cloth bound, 75 cents; Paper cover, 50 cents, postpaid.

PREFATORY NOTE.

Although this book has been written within a few months, yet its subject matter has been on my mind and heart for some years.

Coming in contact with so much spiritual indifference and indolence during my pastoral experience, my soul has longed for an ideal church as the hart panteth after the water brooks, and as the weary traveler on the desert under a scorching sun longeth for an oasis.

That the Church may receive the refreshing showers of divine blessing and grace, and enjoy the sunshine of God's presence and power, and go forth upon a still greater career of usefulness for Christ and humanity, is the ardent wish and earnest prayer of the author.

W. H. ZWEIZIG.

Oct. 18, 1904.

SYMPOSIUM

I.—THE IDEAL CHURCH AND REFORM.
S. C. Swallow, D. D., Editor of Pennsylvania Methodist, Harrisburg, Pa.

II.—THE IDEAL CHURCH AND BIBLE STUDY.
Chas. Roads, D. D., General Field Secretary of the Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

III.—THE IDEAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY.
Rev. William Powick, member of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

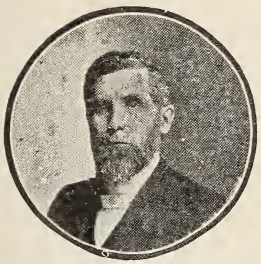
IV.—THE IDEAL CHURCH AND FINANCE.
Rev. R. H. Crawford, member of the Philadelphia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

V.—IDEAL EDUCATION.
Prof. M. K. Zweizig, Reading, Pa.

THE IDEAL CHURCH AND REFORM.

BY REV. S. C. SWALLOW, D. D.

EDITOR OF "THE PENNSYLVANIA METHODIST," HARRISBURG, PA.



ONE naturally inquires, has there ever been anywhere, at any time, in all these nineteen hundred years an ideal church? Whose idea should be the standard? is the next inquiry. And has there at any time been any improvement on the church as established by the Master Builder, or continued under the deft touch of Paul, the greatest genius in missionary effort and achievement the world has ever known?

These questions are not as easily answered as at first sight might be supposed. The poverty of the early church, as contrasted with its immense wealth at the dawn of the twentieth century; the giving of millions now and the retention of more millions by the givers, as compared with the giving of worn-out boats and nets, the all of the primitives; as well as the scriptless, staffless, coatless, moneyless journeyings then, as compared with the plethoric equipment of church workers now, leaves much to be said and little to be settled on both sides.

The widow's mite was more than the millions of the

rich. The greatest in His kingdom are those who serve most. This being the standard set up by Him whose ideals are our guide in determining spiritual weights and measures, we must conclude that the average church of today is little more than a pious club, joined because it is the respectable thing to do. Membership in it furnishes mental pabulum, social distinction, prevention of moral decadence, and an insurance policy for the life to come "provided," as too many feel, "there be a life to come," while at the same time it insures the best possible material conditions to the individual, the family, and the community in the life that now is.

"All things in common" was the ideal of apostolic times. "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindermost" would seem at first sight the prevailing condition of to-day. But if so, and as a result there are great accumulations of money from commercial ventures in which "diamond cut diamond" is the watchword; great development of physical strength through athletic discipline; great treasuries of knowledge, the teachings of the richly caparisoned schools, colleges and universities; and a great dead sea of spiritual stagnation, the product of the pulpit, the Sunday school, the Young People's society and the religious press ever pouring into human souls, from which comparatively little is drawn out for the enrichment of the world; yet who but admires even the seemingly small but really magnificent giving of money, strength, time and self that characterizes the beginning of the twentieth century as compared with all other centuries, except perhaps, the first half of the first century?

Millions are yearly being laid upon the altar of offering, and men and women are "presenting their bodies" including all they have and are, "a living sacrifice" for the service of others, and thus by serving the "least of Christ's

Brethren," they are serving Him. It goes without saying that the freeness of the giving is by no means in proportion to the freeness with which the donors have received of God's ceaseless bounty.

The Ideal Church has no need of reform within itself. It is reformed, and can and should devote all its time and energies to the reform of that which is without. It is intensely interested in bringing all human laws into harmony with God's law. It is bent on creating social and governmental environments that in the language of Mr. Gladstone, "renders it hard for men to do wrong and easy for them to do right." It recognizes neither distinction nor difference between secular and sacred, for all things are of God and hence all things material, intellectual, moral or spiritual are sacred.

To the Ideal Church "all power" wherever found "is of God," and is to be utilized for his glory, and for the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number of those redeemed by the blood of His Son.

The Ideal Church is perpetually a revival church. It stands for the Bible and its teachings, in the life of the individual, in the home, in the school, and as the statute book of the realm.

It stands for better relations between capital and labor; for improving the conditions of the industrial classes; for freedom of speech and of the press and of the people, without reaching a license that eliminates freedom; for higher education of body, mind and soul; for refinement without prudery; economy without miserliness; liberality without prodigality; and for a better world here and now, as well as for citizenship in the best of all worlds hereafter.

When the Ideal Church shall have become the univer-

sal church, let us hope and believe that Defoe's lines will be a universal fiction, for he wrote—

> "Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
> The Devil always builds a chapel there;
> And 'twill be found upon examination,
> The latter has the largest congregation."

The Ideal Church members will all study the Bible devotionally rather than critically; "go into the closet regularly, and shut the door;" have family worship even though the morning potatoes and pancakes chill; prefer the prayer meeting to the lodge room; pray with eyes open and vote that way too; keep the left hand in ignorance of the almsgiving of the right hand; not do others as they are done by them, but do unto them as they would be done by them. In short, they will not forget that they are "living epistles" read by multitudes of people who never open their Bibles, but whose estimate of Christ is determined by their estimate of his professed followers. They practice more than they preach; are short on lip and cheek, and long on love and life.

To the members of the Ideal Church, obedience is the only organ of spiritual knowledge; hence they "do His will that they may know of the doctrine."

THE IDEAL CHURCH AND BIBLE STUDY.

BY REV. CHARLES ROADS, D. D.

GEN'L FIELD SEC., S. S. UNION OF THE M. E. CHURCH.



THE modern Sunday School is rather a Bible study movement for the whole church than the simple session of an hour and a half school once a week.

By the Home Department it organizes systematic Bible study in the home, and especially for the members of the home unable to attend the sessions of the school. The Ideal Church is made up of Christian homes, for the unit of the kingdom of God as well as of civilization (which two are one) is the home and not the individual. So the church of Christ must organize Bible study in the home.

By the House-to-House visitation of the Sunday school movement, the Church for the first time is taking the Gospel literally and absolutely to every creature. It is done in a business method equal in effectiveness and enterprise to the best the children of this world do, and thus at one point reaches Christ's ideal.

Bible study is to be planned for the whole commu-

nity. The visitor to the homes invites to the Bible school, and the modern Bible school of the Church is also the field of richest evangelistic opportunity. It has almost everywhere the largest attendance; the greatest number of unsaved people, including children and youth easiest to be won for Christ; the largest number of personal workers in most intimate relations to the unsaved; the work centers in Bible study which is always the most helpful way of evangelizing.

The Ideal Church studying the Bible will do it in graded studies adapted to every stage of human life. It will find it possible to use the same passage of Scripture for all grades except the very youngest, but will know how to adapt the treatment of the lesson to each grade. The child will get the story; the boy or girl, the details of history and interesting adventures; the youth, their inspiring ideals; and the mature adult, their profound religious and moral instruction in the same wonderful passage. By her trained teachers, the Ideal Church will know the child thoroughly as well as the book.

Bible study by the Ideal Church will be a real cooperation of teachers and pupils. The teacher will lecture at times when he has entirely new truths or facts to present but will call for all the facts in questions subsequently; most of the time he will educate, draw out, what he has inspired the pupils to search for themselves out of the Bible. He knows that expression by the scholar is necessary to complete impression by the teacher, and he gives large opportunity for repetition, recitation, and elaboration by the scholars.

Bible study is ideal when it leads to personal salvation and character culture. Such study will analyze and synthesize the spiritual truths of the Bible for the religious life; it will formulate its ethical principles, discuss,

and apply them as related to personal character, business methods, society, and politics; and it will train for service of every kind for humanity.

The best Bible study leads to immediate action; to repentance and reformation where there has come consciousness of sin in the light of the Scriptures; to wise helping of others where new opportunities for usefulness are revealed; to purer and nobler feelings and character always.

Bible truth seeks incarnation in every man. The Church in Bible study gives opportunity for such incarnation by her movements of beneficence, reform, evangelization, and culture of man in every way. The Ideal Church does not shrink from many organizations. She does not consider herself equipped for real service for Christ until she has systematically provided in every local church for all the complex needs of human nature and human society.

The modern Bible school is most nearly Christlike in its provision for earliest childhood. By the Cradle Roll it recognizes practically that all children even in infancy belong to Christ. It gives them a place in the Church from their birth. It emphasizes also training as well as teaching. Training is more than teaching, though it includes it. To accomplish it, the environment of the school room is reconstructed that it may impress and inspire; the teacher in example is made to feel a new and profound responsibility, for example trains more than instruction; and the home life every day is influenced in effective co-operation with parents. Thus it is initiatory and constructive in all that is righteous, and would render unnecessary all reform or destruction of evil.

The Ideal Church in Bible study aims to build the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and have God's will realized here in love and holiness.

THE IDEAL CHURCH AND SOCIETY.

BY REV. WM. POWICK.



THE Ideal Church is both Selfial and Social in its aims. It has a mission both to the individual and to society. It seeks the regeneration of society by means of the regeneration of the individual. The world is in darkness, and Christ said "Ye are its light." Your lamp has been lighted not to be segregated from the common walks of life, but that from the proper lampstand it may give light. The world is in danger of moral putrefaction, and "ye are its salt." But if ye have lost your salty savor, though ye be sweet as honey and fragrant as roses, "ye are henceforth

good for nothing but to be trodden under foot of men." Take heed therefore lest your light be darkness and your salt be savorless.

The first and paramount duty of the Ideal Church is selfial. Self preservation in its largest and truest sense is the first law of grace as well as of nature. "Do thyself no harm." "Keep thyself pure." "Keep thy heart with all diligence." "The wisdom which is from above is first pure, then * * * " whatever is needful after that. The crucial question is not what will happen to this * * that * * and the other * * if * * ; but what will happen to me, if * * ? We have no responsibility to do anything with reference to the weal and woe of society that would impair the vigor or defile the purity of the hidden man of the heart. If one of two evils must be chosen, we must let others make the choice. We are not called to compromise with evil but to resist it. We are called to be saints, not in heaven but on earth. The saints of Rome are all dead—they must have been dead at least fifty years to be called saints. But the saints of the Bible are on earth. They are still clothed with flesh and blood. Our citizenship is in heaven, but our saintship is on earth. Our real life, its source, inspirations, motives, aims, is hid with Christ in God. We take orders from the throne and bow to no other master than its occupant. We bear in our body the brand of divine ownership, feel in our souls the impulses of immortality, and hold in our hand a mortgage on the eternal throne that guarantees a supply for every need and makes us independent of every foe.

The next duty of the Church is Social. "I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil." "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." And so we are "laborers together with God,"

and not mere parasites upon him. As Christ revealed to a sinful world the glory of God, and was "the express image of his person," so the Ideal Church reveals to the same world the glory of Christ, and is the incarnation of his spirit. It re-echoes his words, exemplifies his teachings, reproduces his life. By its sanctified aloofness from every appearance of evil, that its good may not be evil spoken of, it commands the confidence of men. By its loving sympathy with every appearance of good it wins their love.

Of our divine Lord it was said "This man receiveth sinners," and, also, that he was "separate from sinners." These seemingly contradictory, though perfectly consistent, things are true of the Ideal Church. In physical contact with every sort of human need, but beyond suspicion of every form of complicity with human sin. In the world but not of it. Not the water around the ship nor the sin around the Church, but that which may be within constitutes the peril.

We need to beware of reproducing a lop-sided Christ. He was capable of severity as well as tenderness. To one type of sinners, we hear him say with tears in his voice, "Neither do I condemn thee." But she was as truly penitent as profligate. To another type, proudly arrogant and impenitent though reputable and decent, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell." It was the same "meek and lowly Jesus" that spoke. And so our notions of love must make room for "both the goodness and the severity of God." It is expressly declared that Paul was full of the Holy Ghost when he set his eyes on Elymas, the sorcerer, and said, "O full of all subtility and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord?" Acts 13:10.

Now to what extent it may be wise and proper for

those who are without the wisdom and spirit of our Lord and his Apostles to mechanically repeat their words and imitate their deeds in such respects may be an open question; but it is very clear that social ostracism by saints is the penalty inflicted upon sinners by the word of God. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? * * Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, etc." 2 Cor. 6:14-17. "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." Eph. 5:11. "I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat." 1 Cor. 5:11. "We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, etc." 2 Thess. 3:6. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." 2 John 10, 11.

Now, whatever the Church, as we find it, may think of such a law governing the social and fraternal relations of churches and individuals, the Ideal Church must accept it as the final law on the subject. Our Lord once said, "let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican,"—an object of true Christian charity and genuine missionary effort,—but not therefore a friend or companion. We need to assert the holy dignity of true and whole-souled and full-orbed Christliness. The world recognizes this need even more than the Church seems to be aware. We often tremble for

the ark of God when it is uncouthly jostled by some preacher who has a fashion of blurting out unpalatable truth. Official Boards sometimes practically muzzle the pulpit in the interest of the treasury, only to find that it is the most effective way to cripple the one and empty the other; and at length it is found that in doing so they have earned for the Church the contempt of those they intended to serve.

There are often found true and lofty ideals among those who fall far beneath them. And if those who are straddling the fence that divides right from wrong would ask some rumseller, or dancing master, or play-monger which side they ought to get down on, it would often appear that they have a higher and truer standard for the Church than the average church has for itself. The fact is, the world expects the Church to be like her Lord and never to cringe like a coward nor to compromise like a hypocrite. And it is often found to have more patience with the aggressively faithful, extravagantly consistent and radically righteous professor of religion than the Church itself has.

THE IDEAL CHURCH AND FINANCE.

BY REV. R. H. CRAWFORD.



THE Ideal Church will have no trouble with its finance. for the members will have accepted the fact of the stewardship not only of wealth, but of all money that belongs to them.

John Ruskin in a sarcastic way speaking on the "Parable of the Talents" in his "True Use of Wealth," says, "There is a saying in all men's mouths that they are the stewards of whatever "talents" are intrusted to them. Only is it not a strange thing that while we more or less accept the meaning of that saying as long as it is considered in a spiritual sense, we never accept its meaning in its own terms. In the parable, "money" was given to the servants,

see Matt. 25:27—"Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money."—Money was given, but in our spiritual application of this, we say "money does not mean money. It means wit, intellect, influence in high quarters, in fact everything in the world except money." And do you not see what a pretty and pleasant come off there is by this application? It frees us. Of course if we had wit, we would use it for the good of our fellows; of course if we had influence with the Bishop, we would use it for the good of the Church; but we have no influence with the Bishop. We have no "talents" of any sort or kind. It is true we have a little money, but the parable cannot possibly mean anything so vulgar as money; then our money is our own."

Well it does mean money and it is not our own. It is God's, and we are but the stewards to properly disperse and use that money for God, as the parable teaches us, and an account of our stewardship will be called for.

In a recent book, Dr. Josiah Strong declares, "that each of the great religious awakenings of the past three centuries came in connection with the preaching of some neglected spiritual truth which was precisely adapted to the peculiar needs of the times. Two truths that call for present day emphasis are repentance and stewardship."

The preaching of this latter will be the best way to meet and correct the commercialism of the age. There is the danger of commercial dry rot in the churches; and the only thing that can save the individual and the church from the mammonistic spirit is liberality toward God.

The work of God is everywhere comparatively speaking at a standstill for the lack of money. The cry of the mission field is the cry of God: "Bring the tithes into the store-house and prove me and try me."

In many places scandalous and unchristian methods are resorted to to raise current expenses,—methods which

caricature the church, and make religion and the church a laughing-stock among the worldly, and mantle the cheeks of self-respecting Christians with shame. This is because many so-called Christians give nothing, or next to nothing, while they sing with evident gusto, "Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small." Their song should be that of the man who boasted that he had belonged to the church twenty-five years, and it had cost him only twenty-five cents. They should change their song, and join him as he sings with eyes closed, when the plate is passed, "I am glad salvation's free;" that is true, the water of life is free, but understand this—that it costs something for the pitcher, etc., in which the water of life is brought; or, as the Scriptures put it, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." This the members of the Ideal Church will understand, so that all will be willing to contribute according to their ability, that the current expenses of their church may be fully met.

Again, in the Ideal Church, the ever-present church penny in the collection will be almost unknown.

Lots of people pay more for their peanuts than they do for their religion. They take their peanuts in five-cent bags, but their religion in one-cent doses. I hold that it is a shame for the average adult to put a cent into a collection plate at a regular church service. There may be exceptions, as the very poor; I speak not of these, nor of the children, but of the average church member. It is a shame that the pocket should be searched for the smallest coin. If we had a half-cent piece, that would be given. In fact this throwing in of a cent is not an offering to God at all; it is only to prevent the embarrassment that would result from having the plate passed and putting nothing in at all. The members of the Ideal Church will give because they want to make an offering to God.

The members of the Ideal Church will also be cheerful

givers. They will not need to be dunned for their contribution and then, as they give it, talk something about the church always begging for money. No; they will regard it not only as a duty but a privilege to give to God who has done so much for them.

They will also be systematic givers. They will not be governed by their emotions but by principles. The weather, also, will not affect their giving. If absent, with any necessary excuse, you can count upon their offering, for they always remember that the expenses are going on all the time just the same.

The members of the Ideal Church will also be more liberal than the Jews who gave one-tenth; but because they are Christians and enjoy more from God, they will give if anything more than that.

Some one may be ready to say, "That was a Mosaic ordinance, and is not obligatory on us." We reply,—It is not a distinct Mosaic ordinance. Like the Sabbath, it was practiced and recognized before the promulgation of the Mosaic code. Abraham gave tithes to Melchisedec as priest of the Most High. This priest was the type of Him who was to come. Shall we give less to our glorious High Priest, the fulfiller of the type? (See Hebrews.)

All the apostles and early disciples were Jews, and had undoubtedly given their one-tenth. Would Peter, James, John and Paul give less now? To ask it, is to answer it. So we have the best kind of evidence, the strongest presumptive evidence, that the practice of the early Church was to give at least one-tenth. Paul said, "Lay by in store each week as the Lord has prospered you." Now that was a sliding scale. But always in a sliding scale there must be some unit of measurement. The tithe supplies that, and undoubtedly Paul had that in his mind.

Dr. Locke says, "Let us imagine a case. Suppose a faithful Jew had become a convert to Christianity. As a

Jew he was accustomed to paying his tithe. When on that first Sabbath after his conversion he assembled with the Christians and brought his offering to God, can any one believe that this converted Jew would attempt to justify himself in giving less than he had given when he was a Jew? Would not his natural impulse be to add as much more to his offering as he felt the new religion to be more valuable to him than the old? Certainly he would not give less when his blessings were more!"

Tithing, then, has the impetus of the Old Testament usage and the custom of the early Church, and more, for it has a clear word of endorsement from Jesus, "Ye tithe anise, mint and cummin. This ye ought to do, etc."

We find that the history of the early Church supports our position on this matter.

Augustine says, "Tithes should be paid from whatever may be your occupation, whether war, merchandise or some handicraft. Tithes are required as a debt. God, who has given us the whole, has thought it meet to ask the tenth from us, not for his benefit, but for our own."

Similar testimony is given by Origen, Jerome, Ambrose and Chrystostom.

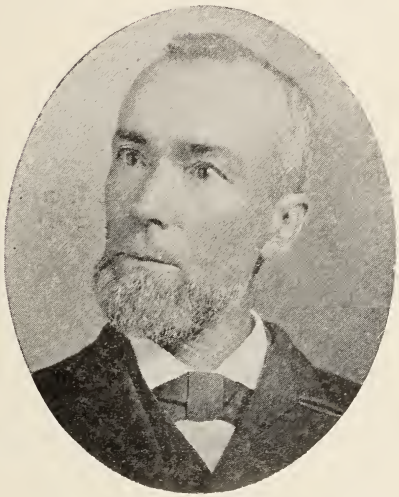
Bingham, in his "Christian Antiquities," speaking of the mode of giving as practiced by the early Church says, "The giving of the tenth is the unanimous judgment of the fathers and the voice of the Christian Church, uncontradicted for more than a thousand years or until the usages of the Church were alienated and perverted by the Papal hierarchy during the dark ages."

John Ruskin, speaking on the subject, said: "Let us not lose sight of this broad and unabrogated principle—I might say, incapable of being abrogated—so long as men shall receive earthly gifts from God. Of all that they have His tithe must be rendered to Him, or in so far and in so much is He forgotten."

Bishop McCabe says, "Brethren, this is the path to victory. All our troubles will end when we get on the Scriptural plane. God's way is always the best way. Let us fall back upon the divinely-appointed plan of giving every tenth dollar to the Lord, and we will be able to take the world for Christ."

IDEAL EDUCATION.

BY PROF. M. K. ZWEIZIG, READING, PA.



AN ideal system of education will produce a well-proportioned development in moral, mental, and material interests. Such an education is the basis of a true civilization. The old Jewish civilization was the best the world ever saw, because the moral, mental, and material were properly adjusted and blended. The civilization of Greece and Rome excelled in mental and material growth, but lacked proportionate moral culture, which resulted in their national decadence and ruin. The Puritanic civilization of New England had not enough of mental and material progress to counterbalance its more advanced moral

element. This inequality produced bigotry and superstition. It is not difficult to see that the civilization of the United States is defective in the preponderance of the mental and material over the moral. This inequality no doubt fosters the prevailing spirit of commercialism, which is so detrimental to the best and highest welfare of humanity. The best results of education are impossible under a system that almost wholly ignores a child's moral nature under the mistaken notion that intellectual and industrial development is alone all-important.

Our system of education needs a large infusion of moral principle, especially the element of beneficence, as an antidote to selfishness and its multiplicity of evils. If this principle were cultivated as part of our education, it would change social conditions. It would solve the labor problem. It would abolish the slums. It would relieve human suffering in every direction. It would cause a new era to dawn upon society. It would make people cease to be selfish, cold, distant, and unlovable. Nothing is more fundamental of a good social condition, and nothing is more generally disregarded, notwithstanding our boasted advancement in Christianity, than the divine precept, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

One of the greatest needs of educational reform is a better development of morals and manners. The natural order in education is discipline before instruction; but in many of our schools this is reversed, and the results are unfortunate. Children grow up well-informed, but unstable in character. Immorality and crime are increasing, notably among persons having a fair common school education. Defaulters are multiplying. Dishonesty and deception are of frequent occurrence. Political corruption is festering to the very core of our institutions. Fortunately, a restrictive influence is exerted upon the growth of these evils by our

churches and Sunday schools; but a correct system of public school education will very materially assist in the formation of moral character and conduct.

It is important to use the Bible in schools as a teacher of good morals. If we consider what we as a nation owe to the Bible, it is certainly entitled to an honored recognition in every school-room.

The idea that the Bible should be excluded from the public schools on the assumption that it is a sectarian book, is untenable. The Bible among books occupies the unique position of a divine revelation. That it is such cannot be logically denied. It cannot be placed with mere sectarian productions. These admit of improvement, which proves them human. But the Bible never has been nor can be improved, which is a proof of its divinity.

No liberal education is complete without a knowledge of the English Bible, because so much of our literature is founded upon or derived from the Scriptures. The Bible has given us Milton's Paradise Lost, and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress; and without the Bible, Shakespeare's works would be deprived of many of their most excellent thoughts.

The Bible should be accorded an equal right in schools with the History of the United States, or any other text-book in use. It should not only be used for teaching morals, but also for the study of literature and sacred history.

In educating the moral sense, teachers or parents should be careful not to use a one-sided method. A child's attention should not be called continually to actions that are wrong, but as frequently to right actions, that the contrast between them may be marked.

Attention should early be called to the sensation of pleasure that follows right, and the sensation of pain that follows wrong; and the child should clearly understand that

these monitions of conscience are given to keep us from the wrong, and to guide us into the right.

These sensations of pleasure and pain by which the normal conscience distinguishes moral actions, are suggestive of the disciplinary means to be used in securing the child's adoption or rejection of one of two opposites, namely, by rewards and punishments, or such mental pleasures or pains as the teacher or parent may impart by giving approbation or reproof.

Since nature aids in aesthetic and moral development by means of intuitions, we infer that these unfoldings of the youthful mind are of vital importance, and that primary education should make a child happy rather than useful. The technical or utilitarian part of education is secondary, and is evolved later from natural needs. A thorough development of aesthetics and morals should constitute the underlying strata of all intellectual culture.

THE IDEAL CHURCH

A BRIEF SYNOPSIS OF THE CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I:

The object of the Ideal Church; the ministry; the appointment of pastors; the time limit; the membership; organization.

CHAPTER II:

Doctrine; the only rule of faith and practice; salvation; future punishment; the second coming of Christ.

CHAPTER III:

Department of Spiritual Work; the predominant characteristic; the Chapter meeting; the Evangelistic meeting; the Pentecostal meeting.

CHAPTER IV:

Department of Mercy and Help. Visitation and care of the sick; divine healing; the payment of sick benefits and funeral expenses; the lodge; life insurance; the hospital, orphanage and home for the aged.

CHAPTER V:

Social Department. Sociability; music; good citizenship; the liquor traffic; the theatre, card playing, and the dance.

CHAPTER VI:

Department of Education and Literature. The church periodicals; the newspaper; the Sunday paper; the library and reading room; education; Bible study; the origin and growth of the Sunday school; grades in the Bible school; relation of children to the Church.

CHAPTER VII:

Industrial Department. Corporate greed; the emancipation of labor; co-operation; the home-building fund; a weekly rest day. Finance. The tithing system; the penny collection; objectionable methods of raising money; the financial grading of ministers.

Appendix. The Christian Degree. The Warrior Degree.

THE IDEAL CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

OBJECT.

THE Ideal Church is Catholic because her mission is world-wide, and also Protestant because she protests against sin wherever found; but she is not concerned about the theological discussions of the dim and hazy past.

The Ideal Church lives in the present and seeks to meet present emergencies and solve present problems.

Her aim is to revive the doctrines and practices of the early apostolic Church and to apply the teachings of Christ to the religious, social, commercial and political life of today. Her dominant purpose is to promote positive Christian character and aggressive Christian service.

True religion is love,—love to God and love to our fellow man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." Luke, 10:27. "On these two commandments," says Christ, "hang all the law and the prophets." Matt. 22:40.

The first of these commandments has to do more especially with theology; the second, with sociology. For many centuries the Church has so emphasized the first and neglected the second, that many persons today have a distorted idea of religion.

The Ideal Church will go back to the original conception of religion as expressed by its great Founder. The

Church of Jesus Christ was instituted for the glory of God and the welfare of humanity. The mission of the Church is to help man in his three-fold nature,—body, mind and soul.

This is clearly indicated by the teachings of the Gospel, and it is particularly emphasized in the great Commission given by Christ which includes:—preaching, or the work of evangelization; teaching, or Christian education; and healing, which relates to man's physical condition.

The nearest approach to this method of church work is found today in our mission fields, and may not this be one reason why the results in mission fields, during recent years, have been proportionately greater than at home?

THE MINISTRY.

Bishop and elder in the New Testament usage are synonymous, the former term used by the Western or Roman Christians, and the latter by the Eastern or Jewish Christians. In our day, owing to the advantage of a more extensive supervision, some churches have appointed general superintendents whom it is customary to designate as bishops, while the title "elder" is restricted to the pastor of the local church.

There is no harm in this distinction, provided it is not forgotten that the two terms signify no difference of order but simply of office, the bishop merely holding a separate office with delegated powers for the welfare of the church.

The duties of a bishop or elder are graphically stated by the apostle Peter:—"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." 1 Pet., 5:2,3.

The touching figure of the relations between a shepherd and his flock covers all the duties of the ministerial office.

The shepherd feeds, guides, and protects his flock. The presbyters of the Church must do the same; they must be faithful dispensers of God's holy Word and sacraments; they must preach zealously, diligently, as dying men to dying men; they must teach privately, from house to house; they must care for the little ones, the lambs of the flock; they must do their utmost to strengthen the children of God and to build them up in the most holy faith.

They must guide the flock, themselves leading the way, setting a holy example, an example of humility, fevent love, self-denying zeal. They must do all they can to protect the flock from the evil one,—the lion who goeth about seeking whom he may devour; they must do their best by constant prayer, faithful exhortation, hopeful encouragement, affectionate warning, fearless rebuke, and the most earnest endeavor, to promote the welfare of the souls committed to their charge.

The work is to be performed "not by constraint, but willingly." It is possible to engage in the service of the Church by some outside pressure, the influence of friends, or the force of circumstances, and not because of a divine call, or from a free choice. Such ministers lose the greater part of their power for good because their heart is not in their work. Their service is to a great extent listless and perfunctory; they work for fear of censure, and not for the love of souls. The ministry is more than a mere profession; it is a direct and personal summons from God for a specific work.

Another characteristic of the true minister is that he works "not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind." Mercenary service can not be profitable to men or acceptable to God. Lucre becomes filthy when it is a motive for spiritual work, and is made the determining consideration in the holding of a sacred office.

The third characteristic mentioned by the apostle is

humility,—not lording it over others, but leading them by the power of a holy example. Worldly ambitions, and the lust of power and pre-eminence are opposed to the Gospel. The domineering spirit is contrary to the very nature and purpose of the pastoral relation. The elders are to oversee, to preside, to lead, but they are not to lord it against the rights or interests of the people over whom they are placed. On the contrary, they are to "make themselves ensamples to the flock." Their ambition is to live what they teach. Example is better than precept; a holy life has more power over men than holy words; for a holy life proves with convincing evidence the presence and energy of the Spirit of God.

The office of deacon as instituted in the primitive Church, was primarily intended to relieve the apostles by attending to the temporal interests of the church, thus enabling them to give their undivided attention to the ministry of the Word and prayer.The deacon therefore is an attendant or helper to the pastor.

Instead of regarding the office of deacon as transient, and a mere stepping-stone to the higher office of elder, it is more Scriptural to regard it as a permanent office in the local church, having specific and very important duties connected with it.

The selection of the first deacons in the early Church enunciated principles that are of permanent application and interest.

The men selected must be of "honest report." Their private character must be such as to win confidence and respect. Their integrity must be unquestioned.

They are to be "full of the Holy Spirit." This can best be seen in a steadfast Christian experience, an advanced Christian knowledge, an unusual prayerfulness, and an intensely spiritual fervor and activity.

They are also to be "full of wisdom," that is of practical sagacity and skill for the management of the particular work to which they are called. Each can serve best in the sphere for which natural disposition and divine endowment have fitted him. The great qualities needed in church officers are goodness and sense. Neither passably good men nor merely shrewd men can fulfill the requisite qualifications.

Other offices in the apostolic Church were deaconess, and evangelist.

Deaconess was a special office, designed for caring for the sick, the aged, the female poor, and the instruction of orphans.

During recent years, renewed interest has been taken in deaconess work. The Ideal Church will take full advantage of the natural and social adaptation of woman, and enable her to make full proof of her ministry.

She can accomplish untold good as a Bible-reader, going from house to house, speaking words of cheer to the discouraged house-wife, and assisting her, especially in the management of her children. Who is so capable to nurse the sick, to teach children, and to sympathize with woman in the cares and trials incident to her life?

An evangelist is one who proclaims good news. There were originally evangelists or preachers who, without being fixed to any church, preached wherever they were led by the Holy Spirit. Such was Philip. Timothy also was exhorted to "do the work of an evangelist." 2 Tim., 4:5.

It is customary in our day for churches to secure the services of an evangelist when they contemplate holding special meetings for the conversion of sinners. Usually great preparations are made for the coming of the evangelist, which in itself is a great benefit to any church. The

meetings very often result in the spiritual uplift of the membership, and in the salvation of many souls.

The evangelist is undoubtedly called of God to a special work for which he is naturally fitted and spiritually endowed, but there are certain tendencies against which we must carefully guard ourselves.

There is apt to be a spasmodic activity in the church. It sometimes happens that when the evangelist is gone, all the activity is gone too; nor should we overlook the fact that if the same earnest preparation which heralds the coming of the evangelist were displayed in the ordinary work of the church, we might reasonably expect the same results, and the results would be more lasting as there would be less danger of a reaction.

THE APPOINTMENT OF PASTORS.

The appointment of pastors to the various churches will be greatly simplified in the Ideal Church.

There will be just as many pastors as churches, so that every church will have a pastor and every pastor will have a church.

There will be no unseemly scramble after certain churches by pastors, or after certain pastors by churches, because the financial grading of ministers and churches is abolished, which is more fully explained under the subject of "Finance." The only motive for a pastor or a church to desire a change will be to secure an opportunity for better and more efficient service. Such a motive is perfectly proper, and would undoubtedly lead to occasional changes.

The appointments will be largely settled by a mutual arrangement between pastors and churches. If several churches want the same pastor, let the pastor decide where he will go; if several pastors want the same church, let the church decide whom they desire. Why not let the pastors and churches, who are most nearly concerned in the matter,

assume the responsibility instead of an outside party who may not know the situation, or who may be autocratic in his decision? Where no mutual arrangement can be effected, then let the bishop be the final court of authority.

What method could be fairer to both pastors and churches? To place the immense and absolute authority of pastoral appointment in the hands of a few men is out of harmony with the spirit of the age, and the country in which we live. The tendency of the age is toward popular government. The nations which are ruled by the people are the most enlightened and prosperous, and that church can come nearest to the people which exemplifies most clearly the spirit of true democracy.

TIME LIMIT.

Let the pastor be appointed for a year, and re-appointed each succeeding year, as long as he and the church are happy in their relations and progressive in their work.

There appears to be no strong logical reason for a strict time limit to pastoral service in a church.

It is said that there is more unrest without the time limit, but I hold that the unrest lies principally in the $1,000 preachers wanting the $1,500 churches, and the $1,000 churches wanting the $1,500 preachers. Eliminate the mighty and magical dollar and much of the unrest would cease.

The time limit is too arbitrary. At the end of the expired term the pastor must go. The removal must take place without prayer, without thought, without judgment.

The removal may be very inopportune. It may be in the midst of revival, or at a critical moment in an important church enterprise. Wherever the limit is placed, the inopportune removal will be the occasional result.

A brief pastoral term, limited by law, must in the nature of the case compel every pastor to surrender that personal

influence which is only acquired by intimate acquaintance with his people. He can not identify himself with the social and political interests of the community. He is looked upon more as a visitor than a permanent citizen.

It is great encouragement for a pastor to fully realize the possibilities connected with his own labors, and to build on the foundations which his own hands have laid. This incentive is more or less precluded by a definite time limit.

Experience shows that the rule of limitation often tempts both pastors and people to protract the term of pastoral service under strained relations and beyond the period of usefulness, simply to complete a prescribed term of office.

The absence of the time limit will permit more of a real itinerancy where it is needed, and longer pastorates where they will best serve the church. It will by no means destroy the itinerancy, but will merely modify it so as to make it natural rather than forced, and rational rather than arbitrary.

An itinerancy with these modifications is preferable to an unlimited settled pastorate. In a pastorate without the opportunity for systematic changes, there is frequently a long period of strained relations and even factional strife before a change can be effected, which is very detrimental to both pastor and people.

THE MEMBERSHIP.

The visible Church is a congregation of believers in which the Word of God is truly preached, the sacraments duly administered, cordial fellowship maintained, and proper discipline observed.

In describing the distinctive qualities of the first members of the Christian Church, the inspired writers give us a resplendent picture of their faith, their unity, their communion, their worship, their self-denying charity, and their

social bliss, which should be a model and inspiration for all time to come.

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts, 2:42. We have here a fourfold training, each part of which is essential to Christian progress.

First. Instruction in the apostles' doctrine. Christianity is a religion based on facts, all of which embody vital and eternal truths. The central fact is Jesus Christ himself, in and through whom alone we know the heavenly Father. All who own and confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, ought to be received into the fellowship of the Christian Church.

The apostles' doctrine was no doubt a vivid portrayal of Christ,—his wonderful nature, his beautiful character, has unique teaching, his marvelous miracles, his self-denying life, his sacrificial death, his triumphant resurrection, and how he "hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel." 2 Tim., 1:10.

One of the best marks of a Christian life is the desire to learn. Conversion wakes up the mind as well as the conscience; stirs up the dormant intellect as well as the slothful spirit. Christianity is the natural ally of education; the foster-mother of the truest science and the ripest learning.

The second means of edification is Fellowship. Their faith had united them in a common experience and a new and holier sympathy. Their rule of life, their hopes, their aims, were one. They were not troubled with class distinctions, mutual jealousies and rivalries, personal alienations, and doctrinal differences which usually result in disintegration and defeat.

The Church today, through the multiplicity of sects, has somewhat lost this unity of thought and action which

distinguished the early Christians. While the separation of the Church of Christ into different denominations may have some advantages, yet in many respects it is to be sincerely regretted.

The denominational spirit, unless carefully guarded, is apt to engender factional feeling, to detract the attention from the supreme purpose of the Church, and to foster a desire for party prestige and power.

In many communities with a limited population, you will find half a dozen denominations with virtually the same aims, doctrines, and usages, each with only a handful of members, and living at a poor dying rate, so that instead of presenting a united and aggressive front to the enemy, and using their combined forces to promote the kingdom of Christ, their greatest concern is to know how to keep alive, how to pay the pastor's salary and to meet current expenses. It is a sad and unnecessary division of influence and power, altogether contrary to the spirit and practice of the apostolic Church.

The present revival of sentiment in favor of a closer union and a more fraternal spirit among the churches is one of the most hopeful signs for a speedy and magnificent rally of all the hosts of God for the conquest of the world.

The Ordinances are the third means of edification. The "breaking of bread," taken in its broader sense may denote the love-feasts of the earlier time, but it also denotes the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, with which the love-feast was always concluded. Thus the second sacrament took its place along with baptism in the Christian community from the beginning.

How hallowed is the special communion with our Lord at the sacramental table as we commemorate his sufferings and death in remembrance of him till he come again.

The fourth means of edification is Prayer. Social gatherings for prayer, as well as private prayer, are here in-

tended. No church can live, no fellowship can be maintained, no ordinances will speak truth in power to us if we are not given to prayer, if we do not by its means keep up living and spiritual communion with God. Prayer is at once the sign and the means of spiritual life. Hence to be "instant in prayer" is one characteristic of a growing church. It was a marked feature of the early Christians.

The strength of a church is in its prayer meeting as much as in its pulpit; nay, more so, for unless the church waters the seed that is sown, with her ardent tears and prayers, it can not germinate and bring forth fruit.

Here, then, we have the four chief means of Christian nurture for all time—apostolic doctrine, fellowship, sacramental communion, and prayer. A faithful observance of these things will produce, as it did in the early Church,—a devout spirit, brotherly love, generous giving, joyful worship, and continual conversions.

ORGANIZATION.

To carry out as nearly as possible the fundamental principles of the apostolic Church, as well as to promote the greatest efficiency, and to produce the most practical results, the work of the Ideal Church can be divided into five separate departments:—Spiritual Work; Mercy and Help; Social; Education and Literature; and Industrial. Each of these departments have important duties which are described in the succeeding chapters.

The pastor is the general overseer of the church and holds the office of elder.

The chairmen of the different departments are the deacons of the church. They are the pastor's assistants, and constitute his cabinet. They should meet him in frequent consultation to discuss the welfare of the church, and to formulate plans for concerted action and aggressive work.

In order to procure the most effective pastoral super-

vision, and to insure systematic effort, the local church is divided into Classes or Chapters. Each deacon has oversight of the members of a chapter, and is the leader of a chapter meeting.

The Chapter is the unit of organization in the Ideal Church. Every member of the church is assigned to a chapter to which he is amenable for all matters of conduct and church obligations.

CHAPTER II.

DOCTRINE.

The Holy Scriptures are the only sufficient rule of faith and practice.

They are the chart by which the Christian sails to eternity; the map by which he daily walks; the sun-dial by which he sets his life; the balance in which he weighs his actions.

The Word of God is the sword of the Spirit, the only aggressive weapon of the Christian armor, with which he beats back the enemy and obtains the victory.

It is the Christian's unfailing foundation and unerring guide. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psa., 119:105.

Mere creeds and articles of religion are formulated by men whose understanding is limited, and whose judgment may be perverted; but this message from God is divine, and therefore infallible.

In all matters of doctrine, then, the Ideal Church will be satisfied with nothing less than Scriptural authority.

The great and cardinal doctrines of salvation,—ruin, redemption, and regeneration,—will be clearly and unmistakably preached.

SALVATION.

By nature, man is depraved. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Rom., 8:7. The natural man is described as dead in trespasses and sin; not merely sick, or faint, or grown callous and hardened and seared, but absolutely dead. Whatever that term "death" signifies in ref-

erence to the body, it also means in reference to the soul. When the body is dead it is powerless; it is unable to do anything for itself; and when the soul of man is dead, in a spiritual sense, it is utterly helpless and unable to do anything of itself or for itself.

The drift of the Gospel is, that man is dead in sin, and that divine life is God's gift; and you must go contrary to the whole of that drift, before you can suppose a man brought to know and love Christ, apart from the work of the Holy Spirit.

Conscience and memory prove undeniably that we have violated the commandments of God and transgressed his holy law. Both our observation and experience assure us of the veracity of the third chapter of Genesis. The degeneracy of the race has been manifest in every age and at every place. "All we like sheep have gone astray." Isa., 53:6. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." 1 John, 1:8.

Not only is man conscious of the stern fact of his guilt, but he is also confronted with the inexorable justice of God, who says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Ezek., 18:4. "The Lord God, * * * that will by no means clear the guilty." Exod., 34:7. "The wages of sin is death." Rom., 6:23.

God in his infinite love has devised a plan of salvation whereby his justice can be vindicated and yet his mercy be triumphant. He "so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John, 3:16.

There is an all-sufficient atonement for sin made through the life, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ.

Blessed be God for a salvation commensurate with the ruin of the fall, and adequate to the spiritual wants of our common humanity! There is nothing scanty about the provisions of divine grace. It is not a little pool, a narrow

stream, a shallow brook, but a mighty rolling river, ever flowing onward, increasing in volume, widening its banks, and scattering blessings wherever it goes. The Gospel of Jesus Christ can satisfy the intense yearning and the earnest longing of the human soul.

The poor sinner, realizing his condition, coming to Jesus in sincerity and faith, and accepting him as his Savior, shall receive the blessed assurance that his sins are pardoned, that he is adopted into the divine family, and that he has become an heir of God unto eternal life. His darkness is turned into light, his night into day, his mourning into rejoicing, and his despair into hope.

The prison is opened, the shackles of sin are broken, the awful burden of guilt is removed, and he is privileged to rejoice in the God of his salvation.

The conditions of salvation are repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Repentance is indicated not only by a godly sorrow on account of sin but also by a forsaking of sin and a sincere turning to God. "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." Prov., 28:13.

True repentance extends to every known sin, however fashionable, pleasing, desirable or remunerative it may appear to be. It includes a complete reformation of conduct.

It extends also to the heart as well as the practice. An unclean stream betrays a polluted fountain. The cry of the sincere penitent is—"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psa., 51:10.

It is not prompted merely by the fear of punishment, but it is an intense sorrow for sin as committed against God who is infinitely good and loving, to whom we owe our very being, and who bestows upon us every blessing that we enjoy. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and

done this evil in thy sight." Psa., 51:4. "How then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God." Gen., 39:9.

The other essential condition of salvation is faith.

Faith is made up of knowledge, belief and trust. We must know the Gospel; we must believe that Christ came into the world to save sinners; we must exercise an implicit trust in him, and place our entire reliance upon him for salvation. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." Eph., 2:8.

True faith is indicated by holiness of heart and life. Holiness is not to be the possession of a few who profess to be sanctified by a second or separate blessing, but it must be the possession of every follower of Christ, for "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Heb., 12:14.

FUTURE PUNISHMENT.

The attitude of the Church towards the doctrine of future punishment has changed very materially during recent years. There are difficulties connected with the doctrine from whatever side you view it.

The question is frequently asked, why did God create man, forseeing, as he must have done, the immortalization of sin and rebellion in the universe, and the unmitigated pangs of eternal suffering for millions of the race? The old answer that it is for the glory of God does not appear to be sensible or satisfactory.

It is within the range of possibility that the Church of the future will incline towards a belief in "Conditional Immortality" as the best solution to this intricate problem, laying special stress on the eternal life of the believer and the eternal deprivation of the sinner. There are many statements in the Scriptures which seem to substantiate this belief, and the future unfolding of interpretation may bring the Bible more and more into harmony with this idea.

The late Bishop John P. Newman, discussing this subject in the "Methodist Review" of May, 1892, said,—"What ends of justice are involved in the deathless consciousness of sin and misery, of rebellion and torment, of rejection and loss to such a spirit! The old world was destroyed; Sodom was consumed; Jerusalem was left a desolation; and the mightiest empires, whose cup of iniquity was full, have passed from the vision of the world. Why not the cessation of the existence of the incorrigible soul? Will a clearer and better exegesis of Scripture justify this conclusion? Opinions are changing. Biblical philology is a progressive science. Marvelous changes have taken place. Half of the Protestant world has changed its interpretation since Calvin died. Spurgeon led the Baptists to a more generous creed. Nearly all Christendom has abandoned the old-time rendering of a physical hell, a 'lake of fire and brimstone.' There was a time when the opinion commonly prevailed that the six days of creation were periods of twenty-four hours each; that prior to the fall there was neither animal nor vegetable death; and that the world was to be destroyed in the sense of annihilation. Other and greater changes are possible: but the accepted exegesis of today is for life, and not for death."

In the same article, after quoting several extracts from sermons by John Calvin and Jonathan Edwards, containing very vivid and realistic descriptions of the literal burning of sinners in hell, Mr. Newman says,—"So rapid has been the return of all Christendom to original Christianity, so intense has been the light of biblical philology upon the sacred text, and so enlarged and exalted are our ideas of the justice and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ, that such sermons would find no tolerance now in the house of the Lord."

It is undeniable that a readjustment of thought and interpretation is taking place on this subject, and many preachers who no longer believe in a literally burning hell

have, in the reaction of their thought, gone to the other extreme and say nothing about this vital doctrine.

That there should be changes of interpretation does not in the least invalidate or weaken this doctrine.

The Bible, being a communication from the Infinite to the finite, must of necessity treat of matters that can be brought to the mind only by means of figurative statements. Take for instance the apocalyptic description of heaven. This grand passage brings truth to the most uncultured, as well as to the most intelligent reader, but in a different way. The former believes in real streets of gold and gates of pearl. In this there is certainly no harm. While the mind is still carnal, and incapable of discerning spiritual truth, it is far better to believe in, and strive for such a heaven than to believe in no heaven at all. The latter, through these symbols, gets a conception of the ineffable beauties of heaven. Only by means of the strongest and most striking figures of speech can an adequate idea of heaven be conveyed to the mind.

The same is doubtless true of the reverse idea, namely, of hell. The expression "hell fire" conveys an adequate idea of the final punishment of the wicked, whatever its character may be. The picture is not too strong, nor too frightful. It is suited to convey its truth to all classes and conditions of mankind,—to the ignorant as well as the most cultured.

The statements of truth in the Bible have no respect to a higher or lower state of civilization or intelligence. If the intelligence or advancement of the twentieth century had prevailed in the first century, we would have the doctrine of future punishment expressed in the New Testament in exactly the same terms.

To a certain extent, as a man believes, so is he. If he believes in a literal hell, and is at all consistent, an impulse of fear is ever present, by which he will regulate his life ac-

cordingly. If he believes that future punishment is expressed symbolically, he will be deterred from wickedness according as he is actuated by true or false methods of interpretation. Hence, a misinterpretation is misleading, and extremely dangerous. The true Christian will not depend on mere opinion for his interpretation of so momentous a matter, but will interpret upon the basis of his faith, which alone will preserve him from error, and secure his safety.

Whatever may be the differences of honest opinion concerning the subject of future punishment, all who believe the Bible must believe that God has set before every man,—good and evil, blessing and cursing, life and death.

The doom of the sinner is outer darkness, utter ruin, destruction, death, which in its effect shall be eternal; while the believer shall be rewarded with life, and everlasting felicity.

The saint shall receive infinite gain and the sinner shall suffer irreparable loss.

We have sufficient authority from the revealed Word of God to declare that the punishment of the sinner will be just, awful, and eternal. Jesus, the source of all final authority, gives us the plain and positive statement,—"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark, 16:16.

There is nothing in the Word of God to warrant a belief in a second probation, or in a universal salvation irrespective of a man's character and conduct upon earth.

The punishment of the wicked is not only Scriptural, but also a strong deterrent doctrine upon the sinner, While fear should by no means be the predominant motive in leading a soul to seek God, yet it is a proper ingredient of genuine repentance.

We are told that Noah was "moved with fear" when he prepared an ark to the saving of his house. Heb., 11:7. When the Philippian jailer saw that the foundations of the

prison were shaken and all the doors were opened, no doubt fear was one of the motives which led him to come trembling before Paul and Silas and to cry out,—"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Acts, 16:30.

Very often this is the first motive that comes with force to the callous heart of man. The harrow of divine wrath must break up the hard soil before the good seed can take root and germinate. If the storm is coming, is it not the part of wisdom to prepare for it?

"Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?" Nahum, 1:3-6.

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST.

There is perhaps no more important doctrine of the Christian religion and none more generally overlooked than the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ordinarily the minister of the Gospel will present to his congregation the life of Christ from his birth through all the stages of his life, dwelling particularly upon his suffering, death, resurrection, ascension, and intercession, and then stop short without emphasizing the joyous, comforting, and soul-inspiring fact of his coming again.

Several reasons may be assigned for this state of affairs.

First,—Some persons, controlled to some extent at least, by a spirit of fanaticism, have set certain dates for the appearing of the Lord, and have thus brought disrepute upon this doctrine; but is this a valid reason why we should cast it aside altogether?

Second,—Some persons maintain that the second coming of Christ and death are synonymous.

Such a passage of Scripture as Matt., 24:44,—"Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh," is frequently taken as a text for a funeral sermon in which the statement of the text is

wholly applied to death, which is misleading, for such passages mean exactly what they say.

The only point of similarity between death and Christ's coming is that both are uncertain as to time. In every other respect they have as wide a dissimilarity as day and night.

Death signifies weakness, weeping, pain, and separation; Christ's coming signifies strength, gladness, joy, and reunion.

Death is an enemy; disguise it as we may by the loving ministrations of friends, and the presence and sympathy of those who love us, it is nevertheless an enemy, the last enemy that we shall be called upon to fight, 1 Cor., 15:26; but at Christ's coming we are raised from the dead, and shout victory over death and the grave. "O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave, where is thy victory? 1 Cor., 15:55.

The coming of Christ is the consummation of the Christian's hope; the completion of his redemption. "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Cor., 15:54.

Third,—Some persons place the second coming of Christ after the Millennium, in which case there would not be any occasion to watch for it or to be much concerned about it. It is not natural that any one would be very much interested in an event which we believe to be one thousand years or more in the future; so that, instead of being the undisputed and universal belief of the Church as it was during the first three hundred years of her history, its significance has been apparently forgotten, and the Church in general has a very dim and confused conception of this glorious truth, which the apostle Paul calls "that blessed hope." Titus, 2:13.

Mosheim says: "The prevailing opinion that Christ

was to come and reign a thousand years among men before the final dissolution of the world, had met no opposition previous to the time of Origen."

Gibbon says concerning this doctrine in the early Church: "It appears to have been the reigning sentiment of orthodox believers."

The Church, intoxicated with political ambition and steeped in vice and superstition, became fearfully corrupt. Forsaking her Lord and his teachings, she plunged into the dark ages and the doctrine of the Second Coming of Christ, like that of Justification by Faith which was revived by Luther, and that of the Witness of the Spirit which was revived by Wesley, was almost lost sight of, but in recent years it has been studied and preached with increasing interest, and is gradually assuming the same prominence which it occupied in the early Church.

The second coming of Christ is an extremely practical doctrine, producing the most salutary effects on the faith and conduct of Christians.

It is a subject of great importance to the Church. This is evident from the amount of testimony relative to it in the Scriptures. The inspired writers, in their threatenings against the ungodly, in their words of hope and encouragement for the saints, and in their exhortations to repentance, hold up the great fact of the second coming of the Son of man, as that which should alarm and arouse the careless, and also comfort the people of God.

Christ's coming is also prominently held forth, as the time when the righteous will be rewarded. "When the Chief Shepherd shall appear," says Peter, "ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." 1 Pet., 5:4. And Paul looks forward to the day of Christ's appearing as the time when not only he, but all who love the appearing of

their Lord, shall receive the crown of righteousness which is laid up for such. 2 Tim., 4:8.

Most frequently, however, is this great doctrine used as an incentive to repentance, watchfulness, prayer, and holy living. "Watch," is the emphatic injunction of our Lord in connection with the numerous declarations of his second coming in the gospels.

Paul exhorts to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to "live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus, 2:12, 13.

James says, "Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." Jas., 5:8.

Peter says, "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God." 2 Pet., 3:11, 12.

The last promise recorded in the Bible is "Surely I come quickly." This is the anchor and stay of the faithful, the sound of an alarm and a warning cry to the wicked.

The last prayer recorded in the Bible is, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Thus in calm and patient hope the apostle answers his Lord. May this be the aspiration, longing, and prayer of our own souls!

"Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." 2 Pet. 3:14.

CHAPTER III.

DEPARTMENT OF SPIRITUAL WORK.

Spirituality is the predominant characteristic of the Ideal Church. Other things are essential but this is absolutely necessary. To be successful in her mission, the Church must have the indwelling presence of Christ and the constant anointing of divine power.

As the disciples had to tarry in the upper room in earnest prayer and with one accord to receive the baptism of power which qualified them to go out on their great mission to evangelize the world, so our power to-day must come from the same source and must be procured in the same way.

It is a fatal mistake for any church to substitute oratory, music, architecture, wealth, popularity or anything else for spirituality. "Without me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing." You may talk a good deal without him; you may hold conferences and conventions; but doing is another matter.

Without Jesus you can talk any quantity; but without him you can do nothing. You may lay your plans, and arrange your machinery, and start your schemes; but without the Lord you will do nothing.

You may have all the money that wealth can bestow, all the learning that the schools can provide, and all the oratory that the most brilliant genius can supply; but "Without me," saith Christ, "ye can do nothing."

A church without spirituality has only a name to live while it is dead, and not one soul shall be converted to God through her instrumentality.

It can be said of a true church as was said of Israel: "the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them." Num. 23:21.

The live church receives inspiration and courage from an ever living and ever present Leader. We want no other leader in the Church when we have God; he only can guide us through conflict to victory. That movement is right which is led by God, and that is sure to be wrong, though led in the best possible way, if God be absent.

When the Lord is with a church, her power is not in numbers, though she will speedily increase; her power is not in wealth, though the money will come when it is needed; her power lies in God and that power becomes irresistible and unconquerable. She will be noted for rugged strength, massive force and invincible energy.

She will be a standing protest against all manner of wickedness in the community. Her mission, like that of her divine Master, is to destroy the works of the devil. She is a beacon, showing the sinner his danger and directing him to Christ and right living.

The department of Spiritual Work, which is the most important in the church, has charge of the spiritual welfare of her members.

The work is carried on by three distinct activities which may be designated as the Chapter meeting, the Evanglistic meeting, and the Pentecostal meeting.

THE CHAPTER MEETING.

The necessity for a weekly meeting for mutual conference, self-examination and devotion is very apparent.

Most churches have what is known as a class meeting or a prayer meeting to supply this need; but the majority of church members do not attend either class or prayer meetings. Several reasons may be assigned for this lamentable condition of affairs.

These meetings, as at present conducted, are oftentimes too perfunctory,—the same thing over and over again, the same experience, the same prayer,—only an external form with no vim or earnestness. There is an unnatural and unwarranted restraint manifested throughout the service which is dispelled as soon as the benediction is pronounced, when everybody can talk with the greatest freedom and without any timidity. It is surprising how helpless some people profess to be when it comes to the public service of God!

Many church members do not go to class or prayer meeting because of an appalling lack of Christian experience. The only logical inference is that they have no experience worth talking about, for, as a rule, when a man is right with God, and his soul is aflame with love for Christ and the Church and humanity, he will gladly use every opportunity to tell to others what great things the Lord has done for him.

It is needless to say that those people who attend theatres, balls, euchre parties, or other amusements of evil tendencies, as well as those who have only the form of godliness without its power, are not found in testimony or prayer meetings. The reason is self-evident; and if by some strange circumstance they should be present, you may be certain that they will take no active and personal part in the meeting.

The chapter meeting of the Ideal Church is intended to counteract this lukewarm interest, alarming indifference and haphazard attendance, so prevalent today.

The attendance at the chapter meeting is obligatory except in case of a reasonable excuse, such as sickness or absence from the community. What is worth doing at all, is worth doing well. If these meetings are to be attended in a haphazard way, it would be better, for the credit of the Church and the honor of Christ, to dispense with them

entirely. The Church has the right to demand of her members the same devotion and loyalty to the Church that they have for their secular employment.

The chapter meeting has partly the nature of the devotional meeting of the modern Young People's society and it includes also the salient characteristics of the original Wesleyan class meeting, which were to make inquiry into the spiritual condition of its members, and to give an opportunity for making systematic financial contributions to the church.

Some time of each chapter meeting shall be given to the discussion and consideration of an assigned topic on some phase of Christian doctrine, experience or practice. A portion of the time shall also be devoted to song, testimony and prayer.

The impressiveness of the degree-work of the lodge can be utilized to good advantage in instructing young converts as to the nature and obligations of the Christian life. Such object lessons would undoubtedly help to sustain the interest and also produce an excellent effect.

Take, for instance, a "Pilgrim" degree, describing a Christian's journey through this world to the "Eternal City;" a "Warrior" degree, describing a Christian's conflict, the foe to be encountered, and the armor with which he must be clad to successfully meet the enemy; or a "Christian" degree, describing the significance of that term and the responsibilities assumed by making such a profession.

Certain questions relating chiefly to personal character and conduct shall be submitted at each meeting to which satisfactory answers must be given.

(a.) By the Department of Spiritual Work:—"Are you striving, by God's help, to obey the Ten Commandments, and to shape your life according to the teachings of

Christ?" "Are you endeavoring to measure up to the test of discipleship given by our Lord when he said,—Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me?" (Mark 8:34.)

(b.) By the Department of Mercy and Help,—"Are there any sick?" "Are there any requiring temporal relief?" "Are there any out of employment?"

(c.) By the Social Department,—"Have you kept yourself free from all entangling alliances with the world, such as ungodly company and sinful amusements?" "Have you abstained from the use of intoxicating liquors as a beverage, and are you separate from all political parties that are not outspoken in their hostility to the liquor traffic?"

(d.) By the Department of Education and Literature,—"Do you read our church periodicals?" "Believing the Holy Scriptures to be the message of God to man, do you study them daily for your spiritual profit and edification?" "Are you encouraging, both by precept and example, the Bible school of the church?"

(e.) By the Industrial Department,—"Are you endeavoring to be diligent in business, as well as fervent in spirit?" "Have you contracted any debt without a probability of paying it?" "Are you giving at least a tenth of your income to the Lord, not grudgingly or of necessity, but because you realize the fact of your stewardship and the right of God's claim upon you?"

THE EVANGELISTIC MEETING.

The Ideal Church will be pre-eminently noted as a soul-saving church. Her great two-fold purpose is to seek the spiritual growth of believers and the salvation of sinners. She will not reserve a few months in the year for a "protracted meeting," but she will put forth a continuous effort to win souls. The time usually selected for the protracted meeting is in the worst part of the year, when the

weather is intensely cold and stormy, the roads bad, and the walking dangerous, which makes it extremely difficult to rally all the forces for the work; moreover, the protracted meeting idea trains people to think that there can be a relaxation in evangelistic work during the greater part of the year.

In the primitive Church, there were added to the Church daily such as should be saved; and the Church today should be satisfied with nothing less than the conversion of sinners in every month of the year. For this purpose there should be one or more evangelistic meetings held every week in which all the preaching, exhortation, singing and prayer ought to be directed to this specific end.

There is great need for more personal, hand-to-hand work in the salvation of souls. This was the method adopted by the early Church. Andrew brought his brother Simon, and Philip findeth Nathanael. May God give us a fuller realization of the great impending peril of those who are without Christ, and I am certain we shall be more aggressive in their rescue!

The altar service will be retained in the evangelistic meetings of the Ideal Church. Coming to the altar of prayer, familiarly known as the "penitents' form," or "mourner's bench" has advantages that can not be had otherwise. It is a definite act which, in itself, is all-important. It also indicates a deep earnestness, an intense desire to be a Christian, and a public confession of Christ, all of which are necessary for salvation.

There is also a wonderful help in the inspiring hymns and earnest prayers of God's people as they are gathered around the penitent during the altar service.

There is a disposition in the church today to make conversion as easy as possible, encouraging men to merely raise the hand, or rise in the audience, to signify that

they have accepted Christ. Such methods are misleading, and divert the soul from the real conditions of salvation. The importance of a proper foundation is apt to be slighted, the result of which is a lack of stability.

It is not surprising, therefore, that such persons are not rooted and grounded in the faith. They are strangers to heart-work in religion; they have never been alarmed on account of their sins; they have not humbled themselves at the foot of the cross; they have not fled to Jesus for refuge; they know nothing of that great change of heart, called the new birth; they have only a poor, empty form of godliness, without its power.

Admission into the kingdom of God requires the most strenuous exertion. "Strive to enter in at the strait gate." Luke 13:24. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." Matt. 11:12.

THE PENTECOSTAL MEETING.

The Evangelistic meeting is more particularly intended for the conversion of the sinner, while the Pentecostal meeting has for its purpose the spiritual development and growth in grace of the believer.

It is not merely a privilege, but an express command that we "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. 3:18.

It is a deplorable fact that many professed Christians make but little progress in the divine life, notwithstanding the abundant provisions of God's grace. How important, therefore, that there should be a meeting of this kind for special instruction and exhortation in this direction.

There are undoubtedly different degrees of growth in grace. The young convert, who has but lately enlisted under the banner of the cross, does not know or understand as much of grace, and has not as much faith and love, as the veteran who has endured the storm of battle

for many years. The indifferent man, who is negligent and careless, and takes but little interest in spiritual things, does not stand on a par in grace with the zealous man who loves the house of God, and whose soul is absorbed with a desire to save men and advance the Redeemer's kingdom.

Growth is the normal condition of the Christian. The plant grows every day, the child advances every hour; and if our souls are growing, the process is constant. If we are not religious in summer, we are not religious in winter; if we are not religious during the week, we are not religious on Sunday; if we are not religious in the workshop, we are not religious in the church. Religion is not spasmodic; if genuine, it is a continuous growth. Whenever growth ceases, either in the natural or spiritual realm, there is decadence and death.

Another design of the Pentecostal meeting is to acquire the equipment of spiritual power for Christian service. The key-note of the meeting is, "Baptism for Service." The enduement of divine power is absolutely essential to any effective work for God. This is the criterion of the spiritual life of the Church, and of the reality of Christian experience.

The Christian Church was born in a revival. A revival is substantially a fresh appropriation of divine power.

The dynamic element enters Christianity not at the cross, not at the empty sepulchre, but at Pentecost. Pentecost is as much a fact of Christianity as is the crucifixion. The descent of the Holy Spirit is as tremendous a truth as is the incarnation or the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Luke 24:49. A cultivated ministry and well-appointed churches are well enough in their way; they are suitable for the conveyance of power, but are not themselves power. Appliances are valuable, but only as vehicles for the transmission of energy that is

from God. The early Church, as compared with the Church of today, was poor in appliances. The difference between the times is largely the difference of power. It is the annointing of the Holy Spirit which still sets each of us in the line of the true apostolic succession.

This equipment of power will show itself in an eager desire to

> "Tell to others round,
> What a dear Savior I have found."

When the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit, they began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance. We occasionally hear of a "silent partner" in some business arrangement, but there is no place for silent Christians under the administration of the Holy Spirit. Inspiration and utterance are inseparable. The Holy Spirit and preaching are indissolubly joined together. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." Matt. 12:34. "We can not but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts, 4:20.

The great need of the Church today is "power from on high,—not physical power, not logical power, not scientific power, not social power, not financial power, but power from on high. Power direct from God; supernatural power, omnipotent power, all-conquering power! When the Church possesses this power, nothing can stand before her. The world with its wily allurements, the flesh with its unholy passions and appetites, and the devil with his subtile temptations and persistent efforts to destroy, must go down. Infidelity, worldliness, indifference, and indolence must flee. All opposition will be vanquished and the Church, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners" shall gloriously triumph!

CHAPTER IV.

MERCY AND HELP.

The department of Mercy and Help looks after the physical and temporal needs of the members, visiting and caring for the sick, paying sick benefits and funeral expenses, giving help to those who are financially embarrassed, and calling the attention of the Industrial department to such as need employment.

This department should be in the charge of an accredited physician, who is skilled in the science and practice of medicine, and who shall be paid by the Church.

His special mission is to proclaim the gospel of health; to teach the laws of physiology and hygiene, and to urge the Christian observance of those laws.

Many cases of sickness are ascribed to the inscrutable providence of God, which may be traced to carelessness and neglect. More attention needs to be given to pure air, cleanliness, wholesome nutriment and proper exercise. Every home should have abundant facilities for ventilation, and no house should be built without a bath-room.

As to divine healing, we would not limit the power of the prayer of faith for the restoration of the sick; but it should not be forgotten that God has established certain laws governing our health, and placed within our reach certain remedies for the healing of disease.

God, himself, almost invariably makes use of means for the accomplishment of his purposes, and there can be no incongruity or lack of faith in applying the remedy and at the same time calling upon God, the great Physician, for his intervention to bless the means and to heal the

sick. In this case, as well as in every other experience of the Christian life, faith and works should go together.

Closely connected with the visitation and care of the sick, is the payment of sick benefits, which is one of the most important duties of this department. There are no financial difficulties in the way of doing this because the members of the Ideal Church practice giving proportionate to their income, which insures sufficient money for every good and noble work.

The payment of such benefits will obviate the necessity for secret societies. We do not especially condemn secret societies. As far as we know, they accomplish good and are founded upon good principles.

But it must be admitted that an enormous amount of energy, time and money is diverted from the Church by these societies, which could be used to far better advantage in the work of the Church; also, that these societies have a tendency to lead men and women to neglect the means of grace.

The leading motive in joining these societies is, beyond doubt, the means of protection afforded by the beneficial features connected with them. This motive will no longer exist as the Ideal Church makes ample provision for poor and needy, for the orphan, for times of sickness, old age and death. It is the province of the Church to do these things, and when the Church does her duty, there is no necessity for such societies.

We deprecate the statement so frequently heard,—"If people live up to the principles of the lodge, they will be just as good Christians as you will find in the churches." Such statements are seldom sincere, but are generally made by persons who want to justify their own neglect of the Church. In this way they endeavor to silence the voice of conscience which condemns them for preferring the lodge, a mere human institution, to the Church, which is

divinely appointed of God for the salvation of men through Jesus Christ.

Another duty of the Ideal Church is to pay the funeral expenses of the dead. This expense is frequently unexpected and often falls on those who are least able to bear it. No more practical expression of Christian sympathy can be given to those who are prostrated by bereavement.

This work is generally done now by the lodge, to which I have already referred, or by what is known as industrial insurance which is an organized system of collecting weekly dues, in consideration of which a certain amount of money shall be paid in case of death.

Industrial insurance has undoubtedly been a boon to many poor families who would otherwise scarcely have known what to do when the grim reaper invaded the household, but it is more fitting that the Church should do this work. It is part of the legitimate work of the Church. Christ came into the world not to be ministered unto but to minister.

The work can also be performed by the Church with greater economy. Insurance companies expend large sums of money for high-salaried officials, the maintenance of numerous offices, extensive advertising, and the employment of many canvassers and collectors, all of which expenses must be paid by the people in addition to the money actually returned to them in the form of insurance. The Mercy and Help department of the Ideal Church can attend to this matter very satisfactorily at a minimum cost.

In addition to these benefits, there are certain other benevolent enterprises that will receive due consideration.

It is needless to eulogize the work of the hospital. There are facilities and appliances in a well regulated hospital for surgical operations and the general treatment of disease that can not be had elsewhere, so that it is a necessary as

well as an eminently proper adjunct of church work. In no other way can the Church better exemplify the spirit of her divine Master.

The utility of the orphanage is also acknowledged by every person who recognizes the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. Children, bereft of their parents, are deprived of home surroundings and influence which are so essential to the development of character; and, owing to their helpless condition, they should be the special care of the Church. In the orphanage, conducted as nearly as possible as a Christian home, they receive religious, mental and industrial training and thus become fitted for the stern realities of life.

Another important benevolence is the home for the aged. Owing to the industrial system described in connection with the Industrial department, very few members of the Ideal Church will come to old age so poor as to need help from others, and yet no man is exempt from misfortune. He may have prolonged sickness or in some other way he may lose that which he has laid by for a rainy day and upon which he depended for his old age; so that without any fault of his own, he comes to a situation in life where he is not able to take care of himself.

The Ideal Church will establish and maintain homes for such persons where they may spend their declining years in comfort, and surrounded by Christian influences; such homes to be conducted not merely on the basis of "charity," as that word is frequently understood, but as an expression of fraternal sympathy and Christian affection.

In cases where members of the church have reached a certain age limit, and do not desire to sever family ties and associations by entering such a home, the "pension" idea could be adopted.

Corporations have begun to pension employees, who after years of faithful service are incapacitated on account of

the infirmities of age; the Government has adopted this plan, especially in the case of the old soldier, and the Church practices it in the case of the superannuated pastor.

The Church should look after the welfare of her "worn-out" preachers, but is there any reason why she should not look after the welfare of her "worn-out" miners, carpenters, farmers, laborers, etc.? If both pastor and members have been loyal to the church, faithful in the discharge of their duties to which God has called them, and systematic in their contributions to the support of the Gospel, their claims seem to be identical.

I can not see that the pastor has any claim which should not be equally valid in the case of any superannuated member of the church. If the pastor appears to have a special claim, it must arise from one of two things,—he has either been underpaid for his life-long services, or he has been extravagant.

In order to establish most fully the bond of fellowship, which is fundamental in the Christian Church, let there be no distinction between minister and member in this respect. A system of pension applying to both would emphasize the privileges and rights of the membership without underestimating the importance of the ministry.

Ordinarily, the allowance could be gauged most equitably in proportion to the number of years of membership in the church, but occasionally there may be extraordinary circumstances where more particular help is required.

As the maintenance of these institutions just enumerated,—hospital, orphanage and home, will be too heavy a financial burden for each local church to bear, a number of churches are joined together to form a district for this purpose. A district may consist of a county or, where the membership in a county is not sufficient, several adjoining counties can constitute a district.

The chairmen of the "Mercy and Help" departments of

the different churches of the district shall be a board of directors, having general supervision of these institutions. They shall make a full report of the expenditures, condition and needs of these institutions to a district conference which shall meet at stated times and which shall consist of accredited delegates from the various churches of the district.

CHAPTER V.

SOCIAL DEPARTMENT.

The work of the Social Department is to promote sociability among the members, to extend the hand of friendship to all who need encouragement, to entertain strangers, to have charge of the music, to advance the cause of good citizenship, to assist in the maintenance of law and order, and to provide suitable recreation and amusement. The Chairman of this department, therefore, should be skilled in music; and able to marshal the Church for good citizenship.

Sociability is a very important feature of the Ideal Church. There is no better way to reach the heart than by the kind word of greeting, the warm clasp of the hand, and the spirit of true friendship and fraternal co-operation.

A hearty welcome to all the services will be extended in such a manner that the recipient can not help but feel that it is not merely an act of cold and formal routine, but the spontaneous prompting of a warm and sympathetic heart.

The Ideal Church loathes and utterly abhors the slightest recognition of class distinction, and if there is any partiality at all, it is in favor of the poor, the tempted, the downtrodden, who do not seem to have an equal opportunity with those who, by the force of external circumstances, have a smoother and brighter pathway along life's journey.

There are so many troubles in this world, so many anxieties, so many fatigues, so many desolations, that we want the Church of Jesus Christ to be the most cheerful spot on earth,—a place where the disheartened can obtain

new strength and courage, where the sorrowful can find comfort, and where those who are weary and heavy laden can acquire peace and rest.

MUSIC.

The Ideal Church will have a large and vigorous choir. A choir can be an excellent help to the services provided its singing is practical rather than professional, and spiritual rather than scientific.

The proverbial trouble in the choir generally arises from a lack of spirituality. It too often occurs that members of a choir hold themselves aloof from the spiritual activities of the church, or they may not even be identified with the church at all. Such a state of affairs is likely to culminate in discord and disorder, for the true spirit of worship is absent and they do not sing with the spirit and understanding.

The special function of the choir is to lead the singing. While special and separate singing by the choir may be beneficial and may have its proper place in the service, yet it can not be a satisfactory substitute for congregational singing.

There is nothing more inspiring and uplifting than the full volume of song coming from the entire congregation in the worship of God. Such worship is akin to that which John saw in his vision of the heavenly city when he "heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Rev. 19:6.

The Ideal Church will also use all manner of stringed and wind instruments to produce music before the Lord. Why should the violin be conceded to the ball-room and the brass band and orchestra to the secular concert and the saloon?

The Salvation Army recognizes the utility of instru-

mental music in its work to which may be attributed in some degree at least her remarkable success in evangelization.

Instrumental music attracts the people, provokes enthusiasm, and can be made a very effective means for good in the work of the church.

"Praise the Lord with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs. Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord." Psalms, 150:3-6.

GOOD CITIZENSHIP.

Politics is the science of government. A political party is an aggregation of persons banded together to advance certain principles in which they believe. A person does not lose his or her individual responsibility by becoming identified with a political party. That which is morally wrong can never be politically right.

Therefore, the Ideal Church will require of her members that they can not belong to such political parties that are not outspoken in their hostility to the liquor traffic, corporate greed, political corruption, unjust taxation or any other evil which encourages sin and oppresses the people. "Righteousness exalteth a nation; but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs, 14:34.

The obligations to Christ and his Church are superior to any predilection for a political party. A political party which sanctions wrong doing, either by direct statement or even by a permissive silence, is diametrically opposed to the Church which stands for righteousness; the two are contradictory to each other, and no man can belong to both and sustain his honor and integrity.

If we except the supremely important act of seeking

after God and eternal life, the act of voting is the most responsible act of a man's life. By his ordinary acts, he merely touches those within a circumscribed territory, the circle of his acquaintances, but when he votes, he touches, either for weal or woe, every man, woman and child in the state and nation. If his ordinary acts are subject to the discipline of the Church, why not his political acts which are even more important and vastly more far-reaching in their effect?

A Christian has no right to make any compromise on the day of election. He has no right to choose the less of two evils. The command, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;" 2 Cor. 6:17, is as imperative at the polls as elsewhere. A political sinner is just as obnoxious to God and as detrimental to the Church as any other kind of sinner.

THE LIQUOR TRAFFIC.

That the liquor traffic is the greatest enemy of the human race and the deadliest foe of the Church of Jesus Christ, is a fact that can not be successfully controverted. We can obtain some idea of the enormity of this evil when we note that more money is spent in our country for strong drink than for bread, meat, education and Christian missions; and this amount spent for stimulants does not include the expense of maintaining our poor houses, jails, insane asylums, charitable homes and criminal courts, which are largely necessitated by this traffic; and besides the financial waste, there is the intellectual, social, and moral waste; and who is able to compute the desolation of manhood, the desecration of womanhood and the destruction of childhood?

I will briefly arraign alcoholic drinks.

Life Insurance officials testify that they murder the body, and surely their statements are not based on mere

sentimentality. To be successful, their principles of business must be founded on matters of actual fact.

Experts on insanity testify that they murder the intellect.

Our criminal courts testify that they are the great producers of crime, and the murderers of human conscience and the family peace.

Our poor houses and the slums of our cities testify that they murder human comfort, and cause a large percentage of the pauperism and misery found there.

The Holy Scriptures declare that they murder the soul. "No drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God." I Cor. 6:10.

The absolute prohibition of the traffic is the one and only rational and radical cure of this evil. It has behind it the wisdom of the severest logic, acknowledged by every man.

Moral Suasion has not power enough to tackle this gigantic wrong. Babes can not successfully fight giants. Enthroned evils require herculean force to dislodge them. While here and there one is being rescued from the iniquitous stream by means of persuasion, scores are hurried along by the current, hurled headlong over the rapids, and engulfed in the maelstrom of despair and ruin.

License, also, is powerless as a remedy. It is wrong in principle and impracticable in its results. To license the traffic is to give it the special protection of law and sanction of government. If liquor selling is right, all men should have an equal opportunity to engage in it. If liquor selling is not right, no community has the right to grant any man the privilege to do wrong.

What does the Bible say about the License policy?

"Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine and men

of strength to mingle strong drink: which justify the wicked for reward." Isa. 5:23.

"In the revenues of the wicked is trouble." Prov. 15:6.

"Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right." Prov. 16:8.

"They shall be ashamed of their revenues because of the fierce anger of the Lord." Jer. 12:13.

"Woe unto him that buildeth a town with blood; and establisheth a city with iniquity." Heb. 2:12.

The saloon differs from other evils in that it is legalized and thus sanctioned by the votes of the people. It is amazing that any Christian man should be "particeps criminis" in the matter of legalizing this monstrous evil.

Many professors of religion, who support the license policy, endeavor to satisfy their consciences by saying that the license law means restraint and regulation. Even that view of the matter is a gross anomaly. What a spectacle, to see the people of God trying to regulate the works of darkness! It is indisputable, however, that license means permission. The person who does not hold a license has not the right to sell liquor, and if he should do so, the State would deal with him as a criminal; but the person who holds a license has the right to sell liquor, and the State will protect him in that right. Can any one be so illogical as to deny that license is permission. It has also been demonstrated that it is as easy to enforce a prohibitory law as a license law, if there are honest and determined officials who will undertake to do it.

Every mill must have raw material on which to work. Logs are put into the saw mill and come out boards; wheat is put into the grist mill and comes out flour; the milling process adds to the value, and therefore the labor used is a benefit and blessing to mankind.

But what is the raw material for the gin mill? Why, boys are put in there, and they come out drunkards. The

saloon could no more exist without boys than the saw mill could run without logs. The gin mill grinding slowly, it may be, but surely, changes that boy so completely that you can scarcely recognize him. It wrecks his body, blasts his prospects, withers his intellect, besmirches his character, sears his conscience, and destroys his soul!

A man desiring to enter the saloon business rented a building which had formerly been used as a trunk factory. He engaged a painter to paint an appropriate sign for his business. When the painter arrived, he saw the old sign, —"Trunk Factory," and he simply changed the "T" into a "D," making it read,—"Drunk Factory"—a very appropriate sign indeed!

The saloon keeper is the only man who is ashamed of his business. I have reference now to legitimate business. The merchant delights to display his goods and will arrange his show-windows in the most attractive style for that purpose. The mechanic is anxious to show specimens of his workmanship, and eagerly solicits public inspection.

The liquor seller, however, will place large screens at his doors and curtains at his windows. He evidently does not want the people to see him at his work nor to inspect the finished product of his labor.

AMUSEMENTS.

The Ideal Church will take advanced ground and an unequivocal position on the question of amusements.

It is generally acknowledged that the theatre has a debasing and degrading influence. We have often heard it stated by persons who have tested it and can therefore speak from experience, that the great majority of theatrical plays cater to the lowest passions and lead the soul away from God and eternal life.

We frequently hear Christian professors says, "I have no desire to be a regular attendant at the theatre but if ever

I have an opportunity, I would like to see Uncle Tom's Cabin, The Old Homestead, etc. I can see no possible harm in plays of that character."

Such statements border on exceedingly dangerous ground. The very presence of a Christian in the play-house, even though to see one of the few so called unobjectionable plays, weakens his influence for good and encourages others, who are not so scrupulous in their choice, to continue their indiscriminate attendance upon the theatre.

There must be a well defined line marked down between the Church and the world in this respect. The Ideal Church will forbid her members to attend any entertainments which are given under the supervision and direction of worldly and ungodly persons. "But," you say, "man is a social being and needs relaxation and amusement." True, and it is simply because the Church has overlooked this need that the world has had a monopoly, to a great extent, in furnishing this amusement and it has always been to the detriment of Christian character.

The Ideal Church, through her Social department, will provide music, singing, readings, recitals, lectures and entertainments of various sorts, which are instructive, entertaining and wholesome in their effect. By restricting her members to entertainments under Christian control, the social nature can be fully satisfied and, at the same time, there will be no compromise with the world.

If, notwithstanding these provisions by the Church, persons still attend the theatre because they love the coarse jest, the vulgar speech, and the lewd suggestion which generally prevail there, they should have no place in the Church of Christ.

Lotteries, horse racing, shooting matches, card playing and every other form of gambling will not be countenanced nor tolerated by the Ideal Church.

Some persons may see no harm in a social game of cards, but it is nevertheless a fact that the card has been appropriated by the devil for his purposes. The card is so closely associated with the gambler that it would be a great waste of time and effort for the Church to attempt to divorce them. In making the attempt the Church would lower her dignity and, sadly impair her influence for righteousness. The only honorable thing to do is to obey the apostolic injunction to abstain from the very appearance of evil.

As the card is the recognized tool of the gambler, so the dance is undoubtedly the greatest ally of the libertine and prostitute. A dance without the free commingling of the sexes would not be enjoyed. The clasping of hands, the embrace of the body, the rythmic motion, the exciting whirl and the fascinating gayety are all conducive to impure thoughts and the arousing of the lowest animal passions.

Liberties are taken in the ball room that would not be tolerated in the home. Many a young girl has taken her first step from virtue and has lost all desire for Christ and the Church through the unhallowed influence and associations of the ball room.

The only safe rule to adopt in regard to all amusements which are questionable in their influence and effect upon the Christian life is to follow the example of the apostle Paul who said, "If meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend." 1 Cor. 8:13.

CHAPTER VI.

EDUCATION AND LITERATURE.

The department of Education and Literature has charge of the circulation of church periodicals, library and reading room, educational institutions, correspondence, church records, and last, but by no means least, the important work of Bible study.

No man can be an intelligent and thoroughly loyal church member unless he takes the church paper. Only in that way can he keep in touch with the general movements and enterprises of his denomination.

The press is one of the greatest factors of civilization and the best method for disseminating religious knowledge, and the Ideal Church will make full use of these advantages.

The Ideal Church will also elevate the standard of the newspaper. There is today a preponderance of sensational journalism. Too much space is given to the nauseating details of suits for divorce and breach of promise, murder trials, suicides, elopements, and other topics that pertain to the depraved side of human life. Whole columns are devoted to a brutal prize fight and only a few obscure and insignificant paragraphs to the work of the Church of God, which is the greatest institution on earth for the uplifting of man and the amelioration of the human race. The ideal church member demands a clean newspaper, clean in its news, in its editorials, and in its advertisements.

It is germane to this subject to say a word concerning the Sunday newspaper. The Sunday edition is con-

siderably larger than the regular edition and put up in a more attractive form, thus extending special inducements to the people to buy. The Sunday newspaper is a great detriment to the Church and the cause of God. A man who reads and assimilates the entire contents of the Sunday newspaper has no time for church, and even if he had, his mind, after such a process, is in no fit condition either to receive religious truth or to reverently worship God. The Christian people of this country can easily stop the publication of the Sunday newspaper when they are fully determined not to patronize any paper that issues a Sunday edition; but this is a case in which actions speak louder than words.

The library should be an institution of the church rather than of the Sunday school.

A church library has a larger sphere of usefulness. It can be opened on certain evenings of the week for the interchange of books, and its privileges can be extended to the entire community.

A Sunday school library is more limited in its operation, and the interchange of books creates more or less confusion and detracts from the real purposes of the school.

Closely connected with the library is the reading room, well supplied with magazines, books and papers, with cozy and attractive furnishings, where an hour can be pleasantly and profitably spent and where there are superior facilities to acquire general information.

The reading room can be made a potent means to counteract the saloon with its wily allurements to tempt young men from the path of sobriety and virtue.

EDUCATION.

The Ideal Church is the friend of higher education. A man's success in life depends very largely upon his

qualifications and equipment to grasp the situation, cope with difficulty and to meet the emergencies as they may arise in the performance of his duty.

There is great need of a reserve force from which to draw, for very often that which is entirely unexpected confronts us and only as we are able to meet it can we achieve success. In fact, it is this ability to meet the emergency which constitutes success.

A merchant whose whole stock of goods is displayed in the show-window and who has nothing on his shelves can not expect to do a very extensive business; and so a man with a superficial preparation for life's duties will be left far behind in the race.

Hence the importance of thorough training, and the incalculable benefit of our public schools.

If there is one thing, on which, more than all others, America may justly pride herself and found high hopes of stability for her glorious institutions, it is her system of public schools. She offers the advantages of education to the young without money and without price, convinced that their enlightenment is her best safeguard.

Our public schools are under the supervision of local officers elected by the people and should be forever kept free from political and sectarian influences.

Over every school building should float the flag, the symbol of our national glory and honor; and in every school room should be a copy of the Holy Bible, not merely as an ornament but as a text-book for daily use.

Without the Bible, our civilization would be transitory like that of pagan Greece and Rome. If the Romans, as a nation, had accepted and propagated the Gospel as offered them by the apostle Paul, the Roman Empire would probably exist to-day.

Driven into the wilderness by the scourge of persecution and by the desire to serve God, our forefathers laid

the foundations of the republic, deep and strong, upon the Bible. In the darkest period of the Revolutionary struggle for liberty, Washington made his appeal to the God of battles. When the master minds were ready to form that wonderful production,—the Constitution of the United States, they paused in their deliberations to seek the Divine guidance and blessing. We are confessedly a Christian nation.

The Jewish nation had likewise her institutions founded in the knowledge and fear of God; but her want of faithfulness proved her ruin; and only as we are true to God and his Word can we hope to maintain true and lasting national greatness.

May every patriot, therefore, zealously guard and protect our system of public schools, upholding the flag and endorsing the Bible!

The State furnishes an excellent fundamental training in the public schools, and it is exceedingly appropriate that the Church should supplement the work by establishing and supporting institutions of higher learning such as seminaries and colleges.

And just as the State offers free education to all, so should the Church offer free higher education to all who at the end of the public school training show adaptability for further advancement, and who are recommended by the local church to which they belong.

This method will do away with the custom of lifting collections throughout the length and breadth of the land with considerable eclat and generally accompanied with a great deal of pathos, for the education of those who are too poor to pay.

A young man of independent spirit will hesitate before accepting money raised in this way, nor does he care to fill out application blanks containing certain personal

statements and exactions required before he can avail himself of any financial advantage.

You ask how can the Church proffer free education to indigent persons except on the charity basis. I answer, the institutions of the State are supported by proportionate giving known as taxes; and the institutions of the Ideal Church are supported by proportionate giving known as tithes, and there is no more delicacy in accepting education from the Church than there is in receiving it from the State.

BIBLE STUDY.

It is generally believed that Sunday schools were first organized about the close of the year 1781 by Robert Raikes, a printer of Gloucester, England.

Business leading him into the suburb of the town inhabited by the lowest class of the people, he was struck with concern at seeing a group of children, miserably ragged, at play.

He was informed that on Sunday the street was filled with such children who, having no employment on that day, spent their time in noise and riot, brawling and gambling, and cursing and swearing.

To check this deplorable profanation of the Lord's day, he engaged several women to instruct as many children as he should send them on the Sunday in reading and the church catechism, for which they were to receive one shilling each.

In a short time a visible improvement was seen both in the manners and morals of the children who came in considerable numbers; they attended church with their teachers, and a great many learned to read and say their catechism.

Such was the origin of the Sunday school. Numerous schools, formed on the same model, sprang up in all the

principal towns, and a society was formed in London in 1785 for the establishment and support of Sunday schools throughout the kingdom, which in fourteen years expended four thousand pounds in payment of teachers.

But this was only the first stage of the Sunday school. The great impediment to its prosperity was the expense of hiring so many teachers. Even in Gloucester, the birthplace of the Sunday school, after Mr. Raikes' death in 1811, all the Sunday schools were closed for a time owing to the want of funds.

Who ever first conceived the idea of gratuitous instruction has nearly as great merit as Mr. Raikes himself, but probably it was suggested by necessity to many minds in different places at the same time. It was the means of starting the Sunday school on a new career of success; and the idea spread so rapidly that by the year 1800 the teaching was almost universally gratuitous.

A higher class of teachers offered their services; the schools ceased to be filled by the very poorest alone; handsome buildings were erected, and that system was organized which has encircled the globe and which today is acknowledged by every one as the greatest ally of the Christian Church in the training of the young and in the formation and development of Christian character.

About fifty years ago, the Sunday school entered upon a third stage of its history. The establishment of the public school with its system of free education obviated the necessity for teaching reading in Sunday schools, so that they gradually became restricted to religious instruction.

Within very recent years we have entered upon a new epoch in Sunday school work. The most prominent features which have been lately introduced and which have greatly increased the efficiency of the work are,—a trained and well equipped corps of teachers; a uniform series of

lessons with the best possible helps; a graded school; the cradle roll, and the home department. "Expansion and Co-operation" is the motto of the Sunday school today.

Bible study will have an important place in the Ideal Church. The Sunday school should more properly and logically be called the Bible school. The latter title is far more appropriate and expressive. Sunday school conveys to the mind the idea of a school in session on Sunday; Bible school presents the idea of Bible study.

The object of the Bible school is the intelligent, systematic and devout study of the Bible. Its predominant purpose is to make religious impressions upon the mind and heart, and to develop the Christian character and life.

Owing to psychological law and conditions, it is self-evident that no effective work can be done in the Bible school without a graded course of study. The grades should conform to natural divisions.

We suggest the following arrangement,—

The Infant department comprises the period of infancy up to four years of age, which is generally known as the "Cradle Roll." As soon as possible in this period, the child should be consecrated to the cause and service of God, and its name should be enrolled as a member of the Infant department and as a probationer in the Church.

The Cradle Roll can open the doors of homes which would otherwise be closed to religious influence. It is an excellent means to reach the hearts of parents, for "a little child shall lead them." The child itself will feel as he grows up that his life has been pre-empted by the Church, and that God has a special claim upon him.

The Primary department consists of children from four to eight years of age.

The child has now reached a sufficient age to attend the school. It is highly important that this department be under the care of a teacher well adapted for the work.

The four years of this period should be devoted to teaching spiritual truths in a simple and interesting manner by means of Bible stories.

When the child passes from this department, it should be able to repeat from memory certain familiar hymns of the church, the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments, the beatitudes and the twenty third psalm.

During his period, as well as the preceding one, great emphasis should be given to the development of the child's intuitive love of the beautiful. None but bright, beautiful and attractive playthings should be put in its hands. Its attention should often be called to beautiful pictures, flowers, birds, etc. Beautiful thoughts and sentiments in lessons or stories, should be pointed out and admired. Views of beautiful landscapes and strains of beautiful music should frequently be enjoyed.

Not only should a child be taught to love those things which are positively or absolutely beautiful, but also those things which are relatively beautiful; among which we might name tidiness, cleanliness, gentleness, kindness and politeness. In teaching the pupil these beautiful traits of character, the distinction between them and their opposites should be deeply impressed by examples of contrast.

As this aesthetic development grows, children will unconsciously become disgusted with things that are disagreeable, ugly, hurtful and destructive. There will be a marked distinction between these, and things beautiful, which are harmless, elevating, ennobling, and which will lead to peace and happiness.

This distinction should be cultivated until the children will have a perfect passion for that which is beautiful, grand and magnificent; and a little later, when the moral sense is unfolded, (which is also an intuition) it will be found that progress in moral culture will be in exact

proportion to the development of this early love of the beautiful. For want of a proper development of the innate love of the beautiful, there is a lack of the love of righteousness; for the one is evidently designed to correspond to the other.

The Secondary department comprises children from eight to twelve years of age.

The Bible lesson may be the same as that of the previous period, but now the child is expected to read the text and to make some systematic home preparation.

He is also required during this period to acquire a fair knowledge of the Church catechism which includes the great fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion.

At this stage of life the moral sense becomes rapidly developed, and the child has now reached an age of sufficient discretion to realize his accountability to God and his need of salvation from sin.

The Junior and Senior grades have the same lesson, and are designed to cover the whole Bible in about seven years, corresponding with the present admirable course of international lessons.

The Junior course of study will be more concrete and less critical than that of the Senior, though both grades will aim at thoroughness and endeavor to bring out the details of doctrine, geography and history connected with each lesson.

Upon the completion of the Junior course, the student, who will ordinarily be about nineteen years of age at that time, will be promoted to the Senior grade, there to remain with the assured conviction that he can never be too old to learn, but that there are always new truths and greater treasures to be obtained from that inexhaustible mine,—the Word of God.

The alternating system of Bible study from the Old

to the New Testament every six months is greatly to be preferred to a consecutive course of study.

In the Junior grade, when the boy or girl is passing through the period of greatest mental development, it gives a proportionate share of law and gospel, history and doctrine, both of which are essential; and even in the Senior grade, it affords variety and thus helps to sustain the interest.

This alternating system of studying the Bible is neither unphilosophical nor illogical. The text book on science in our public schools must be studied consecutively from the beginning; the student is led gradually from that which is easy to that which is more difficult; and each succeeding lesson is based upon what has been previously learned, but with the Bible it is entirely different.

While a symmetrical unity prevails throughout the entire book, and in one sense it is a complete whole, unfolding to us God's revelation to man, yet in another sense, it consists of a number of smaller books written under divine inspiration by different men at different periods of time. It is full of historic incidents, biographical sketches, moral and religious teachings and it can be as readily studied at one place at at another.

THE RELATION OF CHILDREN TO THE CHURCH.

Having followed the child through the several grades of the Bible school, this appears to be the most opportune place to discuss the relation of children to the Church.

As soon as the child is consecrated to God, its name should be enrolled as a probationer of the Church. It is not only becoming but also Scriptural that children should, as early as possible, be presented to the Lord.

For certain reasons we think some other form of consecration is preferable to infant baptism.

The principal things in infant baptism which commend it to our favor are a recognition of the child's right in the kingdom of God, and the solemn vow made by the parents that it shall receive proper discipline and training. Both these things will be subserved by a form of consecration.

Baptism will then assume its primitive sacramental meaning as an outward sign of an inward work of grace. In the Scriptures, baptism always succeeds repentence and faith, and never preceeds them. When applied to a child as a sacrament, it becomes meaningless unless we believe in baptismal regeneration which is altogether unwarranted by the word of God.

The Ideal Church, then, will dedicate children to the service of God by a solemn and fitting form of consecration, reserving the sacrament of baptism for a later period to indicate a confession of saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The child, having passed through the Primary and Secondary grades of the Bible school, comes to the end of his probation. He now reaches the age of accountability, when he must make a decision. He must either renounce the world, choose Christ and his Church, publicly confess him as the Savior; or he must step out of his relation to the Church which he has thus far held.

Instead of considering him outside of the Church, and urging him to come in, he is urged to stay in by taking an advanced step. The burden of responsibility rests upon him where it rightfully belongs. He has reached a crisis where definite action is required, either for or against Christ.

It is a mistaken idea, often fraught with fatal results, to suppose that a child must grow up in sin and become wicked, and then by violent exertion and wrestling at an altar of prayer come back to God.

Man's natural relation to God through life can be illustrated by a stream of water. Near the source, it requires very little effort to cross; the farther down the stream you go, the wider it becomes, the more rapid the current and the more difficult to cross.

A child is only a step from God, and the transition from the world into the kingdom of grace is exceedingly easy. Childhood is the divinely appointed time in which to be brought into a proper relationship to God. Children have pre-eminently a simple faith, a teachable spirit, an impressionable mind and a tender heart; indeed, the Master says that older people must be like them if they would be saved.

A word of caution may be necessary at this point. A child can not grow into the kingdom of God. Conversion is a definite work of grace. There must be a definite renunciation of the world, a definite surrender of self, a definite trust in Christ, and in him alone, for salvation.

Regeneration is the result of divine power exerted upon the soul, and "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

CHAPTER VII.

INDUSTRIAL DEPARTMENT.

One of the great perils marring the prosperity of the people and threatening our national life is corporate greed. The bulk of the wealth of this nation is owned by proportionately a few men, and under existing conditions it is very easy for the rich to become richer and the poor, poorer.

There are more millionaires in the United States than in any other country, and at the present rate, in fifty years hence there will be as many large fortunes in America as in all the countries of Europe combined.

Corporations pay dividends and capital gets its due interest, but in too many instances the laborer is scrimped for the necessities of a decent life, and deprived of liberty and self respect by the irresponsible exactions of soulless companies, to which liberty of conscience is often sold for daily bread.

The great question of capital and labor is causing considerable unrest among the people, and they are anxiously awaiting a fair and equitable settlement of this issue which is so closely related to their domestic and temporal welfare.

The whole issue at bottom is very largely a moral one.

It is a question of righteousness rather than a problem of tariff or currency.

Can a man make a fortune by cornering pork or wheat, and, by giving a fraction of the proceeds to found an institution, pose as a Christian philanthropist? Can a man make hundreds of millions in an industry by crushing

out hundreds from the field by monopolistic power and shrewdness, and, after founding a hospital, orphanage or university and receiving the applause of Christian conventions, be great in the kingdom of heaven? Can a man impoverish hundreds of laboring families in order to pay a company's dividends, and advance the kingdom of heaven by founding a costly church with the proceeds?

The enforcement of the decalogue and an answer to the Lord's prayer would be a death blow to current political economy, and would undoubtedly ruin many a stock company and private fortune.

Who can consistently begin "Our Father," and forget that his fellows on the street and in the shop or store are not opponents to be crushed, but members of the one common brotherhood of man?

Is it not mockery to say "Thy Kingdom Come," when our social life is organized on the competitive basis of the survival of the strongest?

Any church which refuses to put forth an effort to ameliorate this lamentable state of affairs is false to her high mission, which is to rescue the perishing, raise the fallen and succor the distressed.

It is the imperative duty of the Church to see that all men have an equal opportunity and that every man's success shall be commensurate with his industry and economy.

This is the socialism of the fifth chapter of Matthew, the communism of the Gospel, which was revealed and preached to rich and poor by the Savior of men; but which must not be confounded, however, with those dangerous socialistic schemes that decry industry and seek to nullify law and subvert government.

The Ideal Church recognizes the industrial condition of society to be of such importance as to devote one de-

partment of its work to its special care known as the Industrial Department.

The physical welfare of man is very closely allied to his intellectual and spiritual welfare.

It may seem a laudable enterprise for the Church to endeavor to save a man's soul when he is submerged by physical slavery and with mind and body wearied with the effort of making a mere livelihood. Such a man is in no condition, either to hear or receive the Gospel; and even though he is a member of the church, his body and mind are so jaded that he can not give his best thought and endeavor to the work of the church.

The Church must lift him up from his physical degradation and drudgery and place him upon the level of one common brotherhood.

Have you ever noticed that important committees appointed by church bodies nearly always consist of men noted for their wealth?

It frequently occurs, too, even in church circles, that a young man with a well filled purse and with little heart and brains can enter "society" while a young man with plenty of heart and brains, but a slender purse, is debarred.

The Church must overcome this class distinction before she can reach the people and expect to evangelize the world, and there is no better way than to give labor its true position of dignity and honor.

All wealth is the product of labor. The millions in the coffers of the rich come from labor. Our national prosperity does not emanate from Wall Street, nor from the politicians who too often look upon office as a share of the spoils rather than as a position of public trust, but it comes from our shops, mines, factories, commerce and labor of every description. Labor is the only producer of wealth.

What can the Ideal Church do to emancipate labor?

First,—Every man shall enjoy the full benefit of his toil.

This will mean a great reduction in his hours of labor, and help to put things in their proper proportion.

All that a man wants in this world, in a physical sense, is food, clothing and shelter. His efforts to procure these things should be only incidental and not the chief aim of life. God has given him not only a body to be sustained but also a mind to be cultivated and a soul to be saved unto eternal life.

But how is it under existing circumstances?—Take the miner for instance. As a boy he goes into the breaker, sits upon a hard plank and picks slate nine hours a day. As he advances in years, he is promoted to work "inside," first as a driver, then a loader and finally a miner. If he escapes death from a fall of rock or coal, or from an explosion of gas, and lives to be old, if he is not suffering too much from "miner's asthma," superinduced by the foul air in which he has been working for so many years, he goes back again to the breaker and ends where he began —picking slate.

This is not an exceptional case for the same principle holds true with the average workman in any trade or occupation. Life is a perpetual grind and there is no ambition nor energy left for anything else.

The whole trouble lies in the fact that because of corporate greed, labor receives only about one-half of what it earns.

It has been asserted by those who have made it a careful study that if labor had its just deserts, four hours a day would be sufficient to supply man's physical wants, but let us allow a wide margin and say that six hours a

day are needed; what a different aspect life would then assume to millions of our race!

"But," says one, "is not capital justly entitled to a share in the profits of labor?" I answer, why should not the Church supply the capital for the advancement of humanity and the glory of God, rather than have the capitalist make an investment for gain? Surely a church that can expend millions to carry the Gospel to heathen lands ought to be able and willing to furnish the means to elevate man's industrial condition which is so necessary to his well-being.

Instead of putting thousands of dollars into a costly pile of architecture, would it not be better to have less expensive church buildings, if need be, rather than neglect this very practical form of Christian philanthropy?

Second,—Labor shall be wrought upon the basis of co-operation, instead of competition.

Every man is entitled to a fair compensation for his work.

Instead of regulating the price of a man's labor by the price of goods often reduced to the very lowest point by competition and the sweat-shop system, the price of goods ought to be regulated by the price of a man's labor. Labor should have the primary consideration.

Hence, it is absolutely necessary that there be co-operation, not only in the production or manufacture, but also in the distribution or sale of goods. The selling price must be compatible with good workmanship and proper wages.

"Live, and let live" should be the motto of every fair-minded Christian man, not only in theory but in practice as well.

Such an application of the Golden Rule would forever settle the labor problem.

Third,—The establishment of a Home Building Fund, from which reputable and industrious persons can borrow money to build or buy homes for themselves with the privilege of returning it in monthly installments without interest.

Every worthy man is entitled to own his own home. The house he lives in should not be a matter of financial speculation to some one else.

Religious denominations establish funds to build churches, endow schools, educate young men; why not a fund to build homes, a matter of supreme importance to the physical comfort and the very manhood of a man?

The man who lives in a house as a tenant at the will and wish of another cannot have that home pride and feeling that he should have. The home is the citadel of the republic, the very foundation of religion and society. No better evidence of practical help can be shown than the establishment of such a fund.

Observe, there is no interest. The speculative idea is entirely eradicated. Every dollar returned is applied to the payment of the loan to be used in other loans, so that the money is used over and over again being continually sent out on its noble and beneficent mission enabling men to stand upon their feet, to look the world in the face, and to realize that they and their loved ones are living beneath their own roof.

Fourth,—One day in the week for rest and recreation.

By common consent and usage, the first day of the week, called the Lord's day, is set apart by the Church and recognized by the State as a day for religious worship. The Lord's day, however, is not a day of rest but a day of strenuous Christian endeavor and service. With many persons Sunday is the most laborious day of the week. Moreover, a large number of persons, especially

among the working people, if they want any time for themselves, usually take Sunday because all their other time is required by their secular duties.

Why not have one day in the week for physical rest? And, as a preparation for the activities of the Lord's day, there is no day more fitting than the seventh day of the week. The fact that such an arrangement may seem to favor the seventh-day Sabbath is no argument against it but may really be considered an argument for it by many persons who are not clear in their own minds concerning the Sabbath question.

They hold that the ten commandments, as the moral law, are entirely distinct from the ceremonial law of the Jews and that we have no more right to change one of them than we have to change another; they also hold that the seventh-day rest antedates all Jewish law and was intended for all men as a commemoration of creation.

By associating the cessation of the usual routine of daily toil with the seventh day of the week, there would not necessarily be any detraction from the Lord's day but it would rather emphasize the true significance of that day, —the joyful commemoration of resurrection and re-creation, which is the central fact of Christianity, the keystone of the Gospel arch, the hope of humanity.

A general observance of such a rest day would not revolutionize social conditions. Its practicability can be seen in the fact that at the present time, all the teachers employed and the pupils enrolled in the schools of our country, comprising about twenty-three per cent. of the entire population, observe Saturday as a day of rest; and if it is beneficial for the mental toiler, why not for the physical toiler?

FINANCE.

Since the Industrial department is so closely related to the temporal interests of the members of the Ideal

Church, it is appropriate that the Chairman of this department should be the Treasurer of the church and have charge of her financial operations.

The Church of Jesus Christ needs an abundance of money. Her mission is to evangelize the world; to carry the Gospel to every creature; to elevate man's social and industrial condition; to furnish ample provision for the sick and needy; and to be foremost in every benevolent enterprise.

Our people are asked to give to the support of the Gospel and the various benevolent enterprises of the Church according to their ability. This accords with the New Testament idea of every person giving according as the Lord has prospered him.

But who is to gauge a man's ability? It is not fair to leave it to a man's conscience, for conscience may be very uncertain and fluctuating in this matter. There may be two men having the same income, and the same claims upon them for expenses, but the one may have an open handed and liberal disposition, while the other has a sordid and selfish nature, so that you will find a vast difference between their contributions and yet both will feel that they are giving as the Lord has prospered them.

The principles of equity and justice demand proportionate giving. This is the only true and intelligent method of giving according as the Lord has prospered us, and if the Jew who lived in the dim dawn of the coming day was required to give one-tenth of his income, surely we, with increased privileges and enlarged blessings, should not do less.

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." Mal. 3:10.

This passage of Scripture is frequently quoted as referring to spiritual blessings; but, while it is true that a thorough consecration of substance, time and talent will secure spiritual blessing, it is also true that the promise refers specifically to temporal blessing as is shown in the succeeding verses: "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts."

I know of numerous instances where persons have adopted the tithing system, and in each case the Lord has verified his promise by giving increased temporal prosperity.

The tithing system will obviate the necessity of lifting the "penny collection," no doubt so called because of the abundance of pennies and the scarcity of other coins. If you examine the contents of the collection plates of the ordinary congregation you will find that they invariably consist of copper with perhaps here and there a few stray coins of larger value.

This idea is so prevalent that if a number of pennies are passed from one person to another in making change, the remark is frequently made that it is "church money."

I have heard ministers and even bishops say, while announcing the collection, that it was a part of the divine service and an act of religious worship; but it seems, at least to me, that the gathering of these coppers from the people rather belittles the worship of God and detracts from the decorum and dignity which belong to such a service. God deserves the best we have and not the fragments.

The tithing system will also obviate the necessity of

collecting money which at the present time consumes so much of the energy and time of the church. It will eradicate the monetary basis. The predominant cry in church conferences, conventions, etc., is for money, money,—as though that were the chief purpose for which the Church was organized. We scarcely ever receive a communication from the church authorities but what it contains an appeal for financial aid; but with an overflowing treasury in every church, as the result of intelligent and sytematic giving, efforts to raise money will be superfluous. The question with each church will not be how can we raise money for this or that object, but how can we use our money to the best advantage? How much shall we give to this or that cause?

Systematic giving will eliminate from the church all those questionable methods of raising money, such as fairs, festivals, socials, etc., which are now so much in vogue, and which drain the spiritual life and power of the church. Such methods do irreparable harm because they encourage people to believe that by patronizing these things they are giving to the cause of God, when they are only performing an ordinary business transaction, paying for what they receive and seeking to gratify their personal pleasure and appetite. A child with such training will grow up with a very little sense of personal obligation and responsibility to the Church of God.

Who ever heard of a sock social or a measuring party to build a school house, to pay a teacher's salary, or to pave a street? The State, which really practices proportionate giving for its maintenance, is wiser than the Church with her random methods of support; and yet there ought to be as much moral obligation and method in the one case as in the other.

Systematic giving will also help to check the dis-

reputable and reprehensible practice of grading men as ministers of Jesus Christ according to the salary they receive. This grading system, which is frequently an arbitrary arrangement based on favoritism rather than real worth, is in vogue in many of our churches and even openly acknowledged and worked by those in authority.

When a man's success as a minister is measured by his salary, then has the Church departed very far indeed from her original design. If there is any place in this wide world where monetary consideration should sink into utter insignificance, it is in reference to ministerial appointments and ministerial support.

The Ideal Church will insist upon the absolute abolition of the financial grading of ministers. She will not pay $500 to one man and $2,500 to another man, with the probability that the former does more real effective work than the latter, which is frequently the case; but she will give every man a decent and comfortable support. If one congregation is financially straitened and not able to do it, others will come to the rescue; they will not forget "to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Acts 20:35.

APPENDIX.

THE CHRISTIAN DEGREE.

The name of Christian was not the first by which the followers of Christ were distinguished. Their enemies called them Galileans, Nazarenes, and other names of contempt; and among themselves they were called Saints, from their holiness; Disciples, from their learning their religion from Christ as their teacher; Believers, from their believing in him as the Messiah; and Brethren, from their mutual love and their relation to God and each other. But after some time they were distinguished by the name of Christians, which name they first received at Antioch.

What is it to be a Christian? To be a Christian, in the popular and fashionable sense, is no difficult or excellent thing. It is to be baptized, to profess the Christian religion, to attend upon public worship once a week, in some church that bears the Christian name. In this sense, a man may be a Christian, and yet be habitually careless about eternal things; a Christian, and yet fall short of the morality of many of the heathens; a Christian, and yet a slave to vice and an impenitent offender against God and man.

In our day the word "Christian" is so universally applied, and made so all-inclusive, as to have become a meaningless term. Its deeper significance has been largely forgotten. And yet how full of force and inspiration it is when viewed in the original and proper sense of the word.

To be a Christian is to be like Christ, from whom the name is taken; it is to be a follower or imitator of him; to be possessed of his spirit; and to live as he lived in the

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world; it is to have our sentiments, our disposition, and practice formed upon the sacred model of the Gospel.

"Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." 2 Tim. 2:19.

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." Luke 9:23.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." Philip 2:5.

If you claim the name of Christian, where is that ardent devotion, that supreme love to God, that zeal for his glory, that alacrity in his service, that resignation to his will, that generous benevolence to mankind, that meekness and forbearance under ill usage, that unwearied activity in doing good to all, and that self-denial which shone so conspicuously in the life of Christ, whose holy name you bear?

Let me also remind you that the Christian name is not hereditary to you by natural birth, but you must be born again of the Spirit to entitle you to this new name; and that the Spirit itself beareth witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God.

That we may more clearly know the validity of your claim to this title, and that you may have an opportunity to declare your purpose, it is proper that we now ask you to answer the following questions:

Have you truly and earnestly repented of your sins?

Have you saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?

Will you guard yourself against all things contrary to the teaching of God's Word, and endeavor to lead a holy life, following the commandments of God?

Will you earnestly strive by the help of God, so to conduct yourself as to bring no discredit to your profession, and no dishonor to the name of Christ?

SOME CHRISTIANS WHOM WE KNOW.

THE SQUARE CHRISTIAN.



He has straight lines. He has angles, but they are right angles. Every side of him is equal to every other side, which shows that he is well-balanced. He also fits in a square place.

The religion of Jesus Christ beams from his countenance. There is no necessity for him to tell his neighbors that he is a Christian; they know it, for they can see it. His voice brings cheer; his hand-shake brings comfort; his very presence is a benediction.

The square Christian loves the means of grace. He is a regular attendant, not simply because it is a duty, but because it is a privilege and a delight. He will not decline a call to service, but is always ready to lend a helping hand in any good work.

Every one has confidence in his character and integrity. His word is as good as his bond. If there is a sick or dying man in the community, however worldly he may be, he wants the square Christian, and none other, to come in and pray with him.

THE NARROW CHRISTIAN.



He has straight lines, but there is more of him on one

side than the other. He is conscientious, but lacks discretion. His judgment is warped.

When you look through a colored glass, every object you see appears to have the same color as the glass, so the narrow Christian looks at things according to his peculiar notions. It is very likely that he has a hobby upon which he harps to the exclusion of everything else.

He gauges things according to his preconceived and distorted ideas, and therefore, though well-meaning, he is apt to be harsh and uncharitable, and very often produces considerable trouble for the pastor and the Church.

THE BROAD CHRISTIAN.

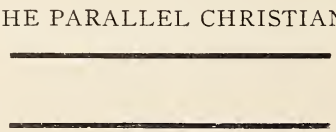


He is straight but too wide. He was square until the Church pulled one way and the world the other.

The broad Christian does not believe in being too strict, or in taking religion too seriously. Instead of being on fire with zeal for God and the salvation of souls, he spends his time in discussing such questions as,—Is it wrong for a Christian to dance; to take a glass of beer; to go to the theatre, or to play a social game of cards?

By looking at the broad Christian, you would suppose that there was scarcely any line at all between the Church and the world. He believes in having the good things of both, and causes incalculable harm to the Church of God.

THE PARALLEL CHRISTIAN.



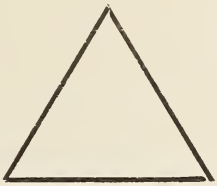
Lines are parallel to each other when however far they may be extended, they do not come together. Let the one

line represent religion, and the other line may represent business, daily employment, or politics. Being parallel, they never touch each other.

The parallel Christian thinks that religion is religion, business is business, and politics is politics. He is opposed to mixing them. He thinks that his ballot is too personal and sacred for his religion to interfere with it. He does not believe in taking his religion into his business, nor his business tact into his religion.

If these two lines were firmly and regularly connected they would make an excellent Jacob's ladder on which sincere prayers could ascend, and divine blessings could descend.

THE ANGULAR CHRISTIAN.



He will not fit in a square position, but tries to be angular. The angular Christian is to be found in almost every church. He is the chronic grumbler, the peevish fault-finder, the irritating pessimist. He continually looks on the dark side, and talks as though the devil were victorious, and God defeated, and the Church going to pieces, and everything that is good approaching a general smash-up.

He has also an angular tongue, greatly given to gossip and scandal. He has no use for the class meeting, because he says that the testimonies generally given there are hypocritical. He has usually too many other engagements

to attend prayer meeting. He is an encumbrance, preventing the progress of the Church, and the Church would be much better off without him.

THE ROUND CHRISTIAN.



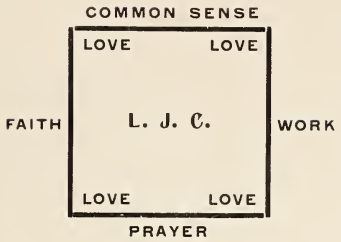
He doesn't begin anywhere, and doesn't end anywhere. He has only one side, and that is every side.

The round Christian favors policy rather than principle, and is ready to sacrifice conviction for the sake of gaining public approbation.

Such persons never accomplish anything; they have no mental force; they have no moral power; what they say, nobody thinks of noticing; what they do is scarcely ever imitated.

The man who is swayed to and fro by every wave of public opinion, and who must put his finger on the public pulse to find out what other people think and believe before he announces his own position, can never rise above that which is ordinary; but the man who makes an intelligent study of the great questions of the day, who has a mind of his own, who takes a determined stand for what he believes is right, and then has the courage of his convictions in maintaining it, will wield a positive influence and become a leader among men.

HOW TO BUILD A SQUARE CHRISTIAN.



Put at the bottom, "Prayer." Prayer is absolutely needful to salvation, and the habit of prayer is one of the surest marks of a true Christian.

Put on the left, "Faith." A firm trust and an unwavering confidence in Christ are necessary for any spiritual life and growth. Without faith it is impossible to please God.

Put on the right, "Work." Faith and works must go together. They are like the two oars of a boat. If only one oar is used, the boat will swing around in a circle without making any progress. Faith without works is dead.

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt. 5:16.

Put on the top, "Common Sense." You can not make a square Christian without common sense. Wisdom, spiritual discretion, sanctified sense, are choice qualities which are greatly needed in the Christian Church.

Put these together with "Love" at every corner. Love is the controlling force in the Christian religion. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. 1 John 4:10, 11. Not only are we to love God and those who are of the household of faith, but we are commanded by our Lord to love our enemies, to bless them that curse us,

to do good to them that hate us, and to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.

Put inside of him, the "Lord Jesus Christ." If a Christian would be sound in his doctorine, happy in his experience, consistent in his life, faithful in his service and successful in his work, Jesus must occupy the chief place in his thought and affection. Let Him, therefore, sit upon the throne and reign supremely, and your life will be filled with the boundless treasures of His grace.

THE WARRIOR DEGREE.

The Christian life is often compared in Scripture to a warfare. Followers of Jesus are "soldiers." They are exhorted to put on "the whole armor of God." They "fight the good fight of faith."

The teaching of the Bible is that there is an unseen organized kingdom of evil opposing the kingdom and people of God. We wrestle not against mere flesh and blood. These, although the visible, are not our real enemies. Not only do we wrestle against inbred corruption, the opposition of persecuters, the enticement of wicked men, the allurements of the world, but also against those invisible and formidable principalities and powers that rule the darkness of this world and work in the children of disobedience. Even Satan and his hosts, who are the great authors of man's ignorance, idolatry, impiety, delusion, and iniquity all over the world. Behind them, Satan himself is the commanding spirit.

It is a war between the world, the flesh, and the devil on one side, and Christ and his Gospel on the other. It is not an affair of strategy between two vast armies, wherein skillful manoeuvres determine the issue, many on either side never coming into actual combat; but every Christian has to fight hand to hand with the enemy.

This war has been waged for centuries, and is carried on as relentlessly and vigorously today as ever. It is impossible to occupy a neutral position. You are either fighting for God or against him. Christ says, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad. Matt. 12:30.

A mere profession of religion is of no avail. It is not

enough for our name to appear on the muster-roll of the camp. Many wear the soldier's dress who know nothing of the soldier's heart. It is not enough to buckle on the armor for a month or a year, and then lay it aside again. We must devote ourselves entirely and unreservedly to this great daily battle of life.

There is no exemption on account of circumstances; no exemption of place or of time. Satan never beats a retreat, except to lead us into an ambuscade. If we parley, it is at our peril; if we pause, we are wounded or taken captive. It is a war of extermination; no quarter is given; either we must trample Satan under foot, or Satan will drag us down to hell.

That we may more fully understand your position in this warfare, and that you may have an opportunity to declare your purpose, it is proper that we now ask you to answer the following questions:—

Have you thrown down every weapon of rebellion and made a full surrender of yourself to God?

Do you acknowledge God's rightful claim to your service and obedience, and do you cheerfully enlist in this great fight against Satan and sin and for Christ and righteousness?

Are you determined by the grace of God to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and never to relinquish the battle as long as life shall last?

Will you put on the whole armor of God and use it valiantly in the service of our great Commander, never forgetting that his mission to this world is to destroy the works of the devil?

THE CHRISTIAN ARMOR.

Though the conflict is arduous, the encouragements are great. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal,

but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." 2 Cor. 10:4. The mighty power of God gives edge to the weapon and force to the blow. When God gives the commission, the stately walls of Jericho will fall, even at the feeble sound of rams' horns; the strongholds of Satan shall be utterly demolished before the trusty and valiant soldier of the cross. We have an invincible armor which affords complete protection.

THE GIRDLE.

The loins are girt about with truth. This is to the Christian what the tightened girdle is to the soldier. Not truth lodged in the intellect, but truth inwardly received, as when the Psalmist says, "Thy word have I hid in my heart." A Christian thus girded is strong. He is saved from those feeble, lax, and indefinite views of duty and religion which make one an easy prey to the tempter.

This also makes character truthful. It leads to transparency of heart and life, and the Christian holding out to the world a sincere and consistent example, Satan has no advantage over him. Therefore, be true,—true to yourself, to your conscience, to your Church, to your country, and to your God!

THE BREASTPLATE.

"Having on the breastplate of righteousness." This is designed to protect the heart, which Satan tries most to wound. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4:23. "Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God." Mat. 5:8.

THE SANDALS.

A soldier's feet should be so clad as to take firm hold upon the ground, and at the same time admit of easy motion. These qualities the "preparation of the Gospel of peace" abundantly supplies. The Christian has beneath

him the Rock of Ages; hence no power can cause his feet to slide. His motion also is made easy; for at the cross he has left his burden. He can now "run and not be weary, walk and not faint." The Lord has brought him up "out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set his feet upon a rock, and established his goings."

THE SHIELD.

"Above all," that is, over all, so as to protect all, "take the shield of faith wherewith you shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one." The shield is a movable piece of armor which is used to intercept the darts of the enemy from whatever direction or to whatever part of the body they may be hurled; and so the shield of faith protects the whole Christian.

This shield protects the head. In these days of so-called higher criticism and speculative thought, there are many strange and erroneous doctrines. If we have an unshaken faith in God, we shall not be swayed by every wind that blows, but shall be able to hold fast to the pure and unadulterated truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

This shield protects the Christian's heart. When an army seeks to capture a stronghold of the enemy, it is customary to send out emissaries to examine the fortifications of the enemy, and if there are any weak or unguarded places, they will concentrate all their forces at such points to effect an entrance, and thus gain possession. And so the great adversary of our souls knows our weak points, and uses all his ingenuity and strength in attacking these weak places in our nature that he may gain the mastery over us and obtain possession of our hearts and lives.

But an unwavering trust in God will keep the adversary at bay, for "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Psa. 34:7.

This shield protects the Christian's knees. Some-

times our knees become weak through the neglect of prayer. The beginning of backsliding is to be found not in the house of God, but in the closet. A praying Christian will never be found off his guard. Our religion must consist very largely in private devotion. Therefore, have a regular time each day for communion with God, and allow nothing else to interfere with it.

This shield protects the Christian's feet. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way." Psa. 37:23. His goings are established, and none of his steps shall slide.

A young lady once asked her pastor whether she could go to a dance. "Yes," said he, "you can go provided you can take Jesus with you." That is a safe rule to follow. Never go to any place or into any company except where you can have the positive assurance of the presence and fellowship of your Lord.

"Anywhere with Jesus I can safely go,
Anywhere He leads me in this world below;
Anywhere without him, dearest joys would fade,
Anywhere with Jesus I am not afraid."

In the Bible the most signal triumphs are ascribed to faith; by it Abel, and Noah, and Abraham, and Moses achieved glorious victories. Others "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." Heb. 11:33, 34. Faith appropriates all God's promises and goes forward with an assured confidence in final victory.

THE HELMET.

One other piece completes the Christian's defensive armor. On his head is the "helmet of the hope of

salvation." There is no more ornamental part of a soldier's dress than the helmet; nor is there anything that more adorns and animates the Christian than a lively and consistent hope, not a vague and shadowy feeling that perhaps he may be saved, but a steadfast confidence which brings no fear of disappointment.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." 1 Pet. 1:3-5.

THE SWORD.

In the Christian armor there is but one aggressive weapon,—"the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." This weapon is "sharper than a two-edged sword," and produces consternation in the camp of the enemy. This is the weapon which Christ used when he was personally assailed by Satan; he drove him back each time by—"It is written."

Wherever the Word of God is preached in its purity and power, ignorance, superstition, and idolatry must flee; wherever its principles are fully established, every form of oppression, malice, and strife must go down; and peace, justice, and righteousness shall prevail. Just as sure as this land was redeemed from slavery, the day is coming when the liquor oligarchy, industrial oppression, and every form of vice and tyranny shall be swept away before the mighty destructive power of the Word of God.

God's Word has also a wonderful constructive force. It not only pulls down the wrong but builds up the right. It wields an immeasurable influence for good government, and is a greater defence for the nation than all

her fleets and armies. It stands for the elevation of womanhood, the emancipation of childhood, the sanctification of the home, and the maintenance of every institution which is designed for man's temporal and eternal happiness.

The Christian armor is to be used courageously. There is not a single piece of armor provided for the Christian's back. We are to face the enemy, and only as we "resist the devil" will he "flee from us." We are not on dress parade but in active service. God provides the armor but we must put it on and use it. Without exertion we can not hope to conquer. There is no victory where there is no conflict. There is no crown where there is no contest.

We have an almighty Captain who never lost a battle, and whose banner never trailed in the dust of defeat. Be strong and of a good courage. If God be for us, who can be against us? May you never desert the army of the living God and become a traitor to his holy cause!

He that endureth to the end shall be saved. You will never be able to say with Paul "I have fought a good fight," until you can also say, "I have finished my course." Now we have the smoke of battle; then, the triumphal procession. Now we have the sword and spear; then, the wreath and crown. Now we have the garment soiled with blood, and covered with the dust of the fight; then, the white robe and the shout of conquest.

Sheathe not your sword; lay not down your shield; face the foe; listen to your Captain; rally round his banner with ardor, defend it with zeal, follow it with enthusiasm, knowing that if you are faithful unto death, he will give you a crown of life.

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